



Summary

Main Features

FEATURE ARTICLE - JOB SEARCH EXPERIENCE: METHODS AND BARRIERS IN FINDING JOBS
 FEATURE ARTICLE - SPOTLIGHT ON COUNTRY OF BIRTH
 FEATURE ARTICLE - SPOTLIGHT ON METHODS OF SETTING PAY
 FEATURE ARTICLE - SPOTLIGHT ON MULTIPLE JOB HOLDERS
 FEATURE ARTICLE - SPOTLIGHT ON OCCUPATION
 FEATURE ARTICLE - SPOTLIGHT ON PARENTAL LEAVE
 FEATURE ARTICLE - TECHNICAL REPORT: IMPROVEMENTS TO LABOUR FORCE ESTIMATES
 FEATURE ARTICLE - TRADE UNION MEMBERSHIP

Notes

Changes in this issue

Labour Force Survey estimates for prior periods have been revised using updated population benchmarks based on results from the 2001 Census of Population and Housing, and incorporating a minor change to the definition of unemployed persons. See **Technical Report: Improvements to labour force estimates** in this issue.

Data contained in this issue

The statistics shown are the latest available at 22 March 2004. Data sources for the tables in this publication are listed in Appendix 1.

Electronic products

The spreadsheets and data cubes referenced in this publication are available on the ABS web site at <https://www.abs.gov.au>. Follow the links to Data Cubes and Time Series Spreadsheets.

Inquiries

For further information about these and related statistics, contact the National Information and Referral Service on 1300 135 070 or Erika Maxim on Canberra 02 6252 7636.

Labour Market Summary

Key measures

Measure	Series type	Period	Current figure	% change from	
				Previous quarter(a)	Previous year(b)
Employed					
Persons	'000	Trend Feb 2004	9,580.9	0.5	1.2
Full-time	'000	Trend Feb 2004	6,858.8	0.5	1.8
Part-time	'000	Trend Feb 2004	2,722.1	0.3	-0.2
Part-time employment as a proportion of total employment	%	Trend Feb 2004	28.4	(c)0.0	(c)-0.4
Unemployed					
Persons	'000	Trend Feb 2004	585.8	-0.2	-6.4
Looking for full-time work	'000	Trend Feb 2004	424.2	-1.2	-9.2
Looking for part-time work	'000	Trend Feb 2004	161.7	2.4	2.0
Unemployment rate					
Persons	%	Trend Feb 2004	5.8	(c)0.0	(c)-0.4
Long-term unemployment					
Persons	'000	Trend Feb 2004	120.7	-2.2	-10.5
As a proportion of total unemployment	%	Trend Feb 2004	20.6	(c)-0.4	(c)-0.9
Labour force underutilisation rate(d)	%	Original Sep 2002	11.9	na	(c)-0.6
Extended labour force underutilisation rate(d)	%	Original Sep 2002	13.0	na	(c)-0.6
Proportion of children living in families where no parent is employed (of all children)(e)	%	Original Jun 2003	17.2	na	(c)-0.7
Labour force participation rate					
Persons	%	Trend Feb 2004	63.5	(c)0.0	(c)-0.5
Actual hours worked					
Aggregate weekly hours	mill. hours	Original Feb 2004	336.4	1.7	1.2
Average weekly hours - Persons	hours	Original Feb 2004	35.3	1.7	0.3
Average weekly hours - Full-time	hours	Original Feb 2004	42.3	1.0	-0.1
Average weekly hours - Part-time	hours	Original Feb 2004	16.9	2.6	2.3
Part-time workers					

Wage cost index	Proportion who preferred to work more hours	%	Original	Feb 2004	26.5	(c)-1.0	(c)-1.3
	Total hourly rates of pay excluding bonuses	index no.	Trend	Dec qtr 2003	122.6	0.9	3.6
Average weekly earnings	Full-time adult ordinary time earnings	\$	Trend	Nov 2003	939.60	1.1	5.7
	All employees total earnings	\$	Trend	Nov 2003	744.50	1.3	5.6
Compensation of employees	Household income account	\$m	Trend	Dec qtr 2003	93,763	1.0	5.3
	Average earnings (National Accounts basis - nominal) per week \$		Trend	Dec qtr 2003	887	1.0	3.5
Industrial disputes	Working days lost	'000	Original	Dec qtr 2003	151.4	-8.9	117.5
	Working days lost per 1,000 employees	number	Original	Dec qtr 2003	18.2	-9.8	119.6
Job vacancies	Australia	'000	Trend	Nov 2003	104.6	-0.6	1.2

na not available

(a) Same period previous quarter (monthly data is presented for the middle month of each quarter).

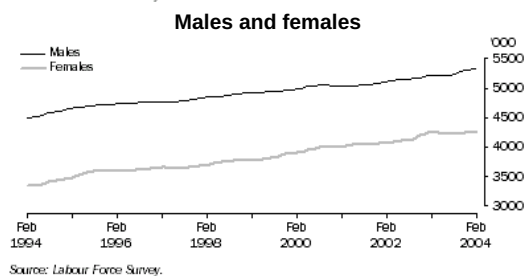
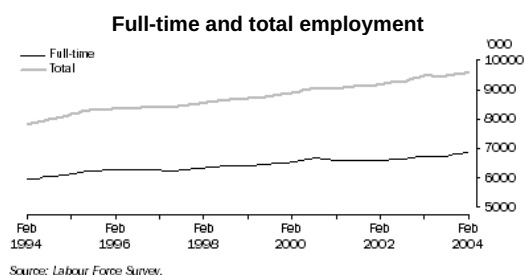
(b) Same period previous year.

(c) Change is in percentage points.

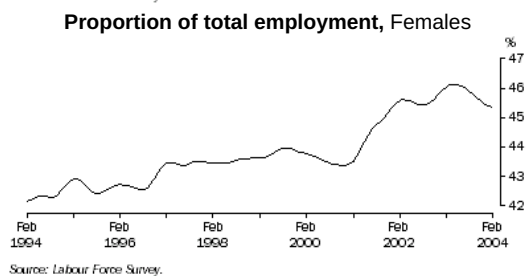
(d) See table 4.1 or the Glossary for further explanation of labour underutilisation rates.

(e) Children are aged under 15 years. See the Explanatory Notes for information on family data.

Employment: trend series

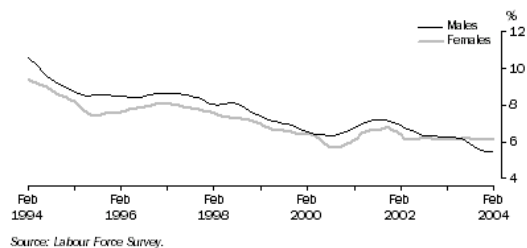


Part-time employment: trend series

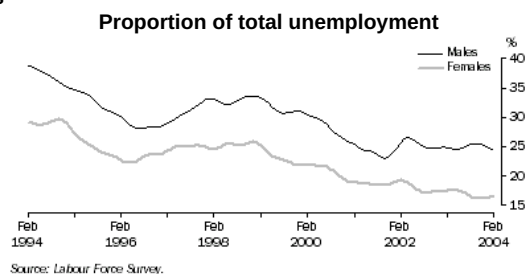


Unemployment rate: trend series

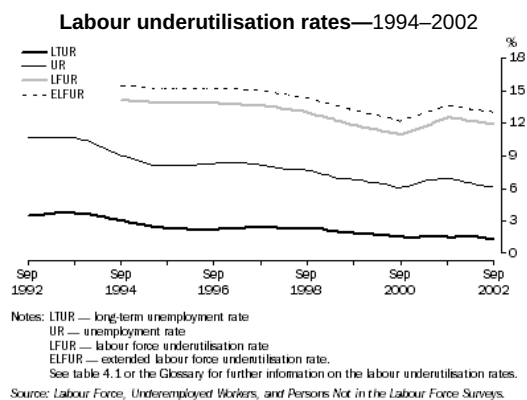
Males and females



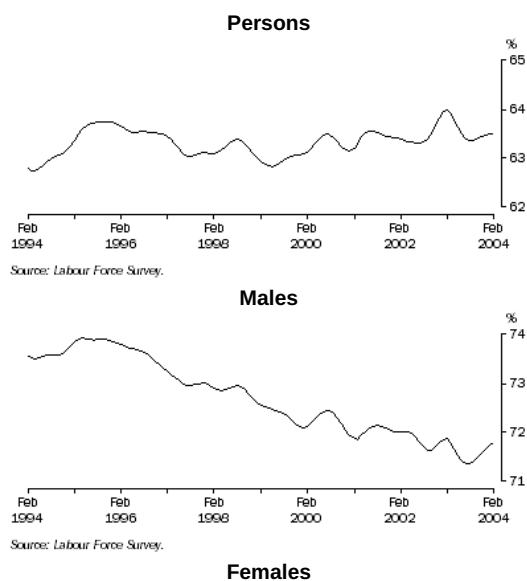
Long-term unemployment: trend series



Underutilised labour



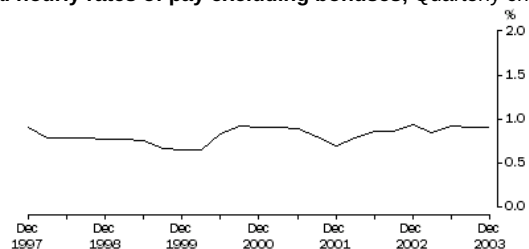
Participation rate: trend series





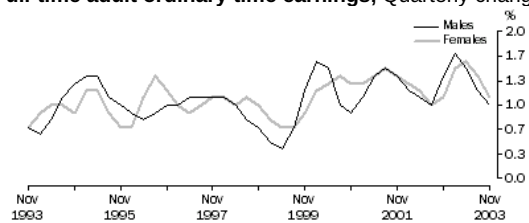
Wage cost index: trend series

Total hourly rates of pay excluding bonuses, Quarterly change

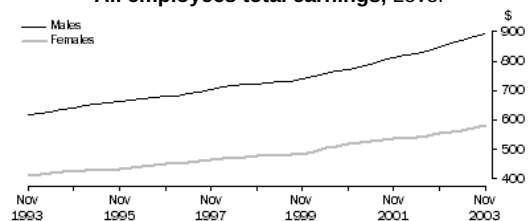


Average weekly earnings: trend series

Full-time adult ordinary time earnings, Quarterly change

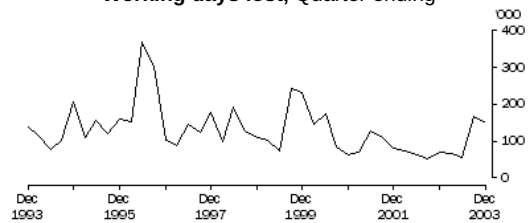


All employees total earnings, Level



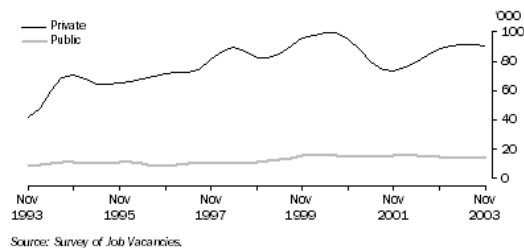
Industrial disputes: original series

Working days lost, Quarter ending



Job vacancies: trend series

Job vacancies, By sector



Labour statistics news

Labour theme page

The ABS Labour Theme Page, available on the ABS web site, provides a guide to the range of ABS labour statistics, as well as links to the latest data released. To find the Theme Page, go to <https://www.abs.gov.au> (Themes - Labour).

ABS email notification service

By subscribing to this free service, you will be kept informed via email of the latest releases of ABS products. To subscribe, follow the link from the ABS home page <https://www.abs.gov.au>, provide your email address, and select your topics of interest.

Changes to LFS unit record data

The ABS introduced a number of changes to labour force statistics with the release of February 2004 LFS data. These changes involved revisions to detailed original data at the unit record level which flowed through to published aggregated data. More information about these changes is available in **Technical Report: Improvements to labour force estimates** in this publication.

Implementation of computer assisted interviewing

In October 2003, the ABS began the progressive implementation of computer assisted interviewing (CAI) into the LFS. For the period October 2003 to January 2004 the CAI method was used on a random 10% sub-sample of survey interviews. The ABS had planned to increase the sub-sample of survey interviews conducted using the CAI method from 10% to 40% in February 2004. However, a number of technical problems have prevented this. The CAI sub-sample was increased from 10% to 40% in February 2004 in New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia and the Australian Capital Territory only. The effects of these technical problems may delay the full implementation of CAI.

Once the technical problems are resolved, subject to further analysis continuing to confirm that the change in method is not having a significant impact on survey estimates, the ABS intends to progressively increase the use of CAI. Users will continue to be informed of the progress of CAI implementation, including the results of further analyses, through updates in **Labour Force, Australia** (cat. no. 6202.0).

Forthcoming changes to industrial disputes statistics

The December 2003 issue of **Industrial Disputes, Australia** (cat. no. 6321.0) is the final release of monthly statistics of industrial disputes. Statistics in this publication will continue to be available, but for a quarterly reference period. The printed publication will be replaced with a quarterly electronic publication (cat. no. 6321.0.55.001), commencing with the March quarter 2004 reference period. The quarterly publication will contain a small number of summary tables and will be available free from the ABS web site. More detailed data will continue to be available as electronic spreadsheets.

New classifications for Cause of Dispute and Reason Work Resumed (formerly Method of Settlement) will be introduced in the first quarterly publication. Data for the new classifications will be available for disputes which ended during the March quarter 2003 onwards. Further information is available from Colin Fallows on Perth 08 9360 5184.

Labour Costs

Results from the 2002-03 Survey of Major Labour Costs will be released in June 2004, in the electronic publication **Labour Costs, Australia** (cat. no. 6348.0.55.001). This survey provides estimates of labour costs including: employee earnings, employer-funded contributions to superannuation, workers' compensation, payroll tax and fringe benefits tax.

Regional wage and salary earner statistics

The electronic publication **Characteristics of Wage and Salary Earners in Regions of Australia** (cat. no. 6261.0.55.001) was released on 5 March 2004. This publication presents regional estimates of the characteristics of wage and salary earners for 2000-01 using the Remoteness Structure contained within the **Australian Standard Geographical Classification (ASGC), Volume 1, 2001** (cat. no. 1216.0). The estimates were compiled from the Australian Taxation Office's Individual Income Tax Return Database. This publication follows the release in December of **Regional Wage and Salary Earner Statistics, Australia** (cat. no. 5673.0.55.001), which used the same data

source to produce estimates for wage and salary earners for Local Government Areas for 2000-01.

Supplementary surveys on labour topics

The Monthly Population Survey comprises the Labour Force Survey and supplementary surveys, which provide detailed information on a range of topics. Results from surveys on labour-related topics recently released were: **Employee Earnings, Benefits and Trade Union Membership, Australia** (cat. no. 6310.0); **Persons Not in the Labour Force, Australia** (cat. no. 6220.0); **Underemployed Workers, Australia** (cat. no. 6265.0); and **Job Search Experience, Australia** (cat. no. 6222.0). The first three of these releases are outlined in the recent release section of this publication. Also included is a feature article highlighting the data available from the Job Search Experience survey.

Upcoming statistical releases

Release date/title of publication	Reference period	Catalogue number
April 2004		
Australian Labour Market Statistics	April 2004	6105.0
Indigenous Social Survey	2002	4714.0
Job Vacancies, Australia	February 2004	6354.0
Labour Force, Australia	March 2004	6202.0
Labour Force, Australia - Detailed Delivery	March 2004	6291.0.55.001
Measures of Australia's Progress	2004	1370.0
May 2004		
Average Weekly Earnings, Australia	November 2003	6302.0
Labour Force, Australia	April 2004	6202.0
Labour Force, Australia - Detailed Delivery	April 2004	6291.0.55.001
Labour Statistics in Brief, Australia	2004	6104.0
Wage Cost Index, Australia	March quarter 2004	6345.0
June 2004		
Industrial Disputes, Australia - electronic release	December 2003	6321.0.55.001
Labour Costs, Australia - electronic release	2002-03	6348.0.55.001
Labour Force, Australia	May 2004	6202.0
Labour Force, Australia - Detailed Delivery	May 2004	6291.0.55.001
Wage and Salary Earners, Public Sector, Australia	March quarter 2004	6248.0.55.001
July 2004		
Australian Labour Market Statistics	July 2004	6105.0
Family Characteristics	June 2003	4442.0
Household Income and Income Distribution, Australia	2002-03	6523.0
Job Vacancies, Australia	May 2004	6354.0
Labour Force, Australia	June 2004	6202.0
Labour Force, Australia - Detailed Delivery	June 2004	6291.0.55.001

List of Tables

List of Tables

The tables listed below are included in the publication **Australian Labour Market Statistics** (cat. no. 6105.0). Electronic sources of the data in these tables can be found in Appendix 1 of the publication or on the web site by clicking on **Appendix 1**.

The labour force

- 1.1 Labour force status: trend series
- 1.2 Age by social marital status
- 1.3 States and territories, and capital cities
- 1.4 Educational attendance (aged 15-24)
- 1.5 Country of birth by year of arrival in Australia
- 1.6 Relationship in household
- 1.7 All families: family type by labour force status
- 1.8 International comparisons

Employed persons

- 2.1 Industry: trend series
- 2.2 Industry division and subdivision
- 2.3 Occupation major groups and sub-major groups
- 2.4 Industry and occupation by full-time/part-time status
- 2.5 Industry and occupation by status in employment
- 2.6 Actual hours worked: industry and occupation
- 2.7 Actual hours worked
- 2.8 Actual and usual hours worked in all jobs
- 2.9 Full-time workers who worked less than 35 hours
- 2.10 Future employment expectations by job tenure
- 2.11 Public sector employees

Unemployed persons

- 3.1 Duration of unemployment by age
- 3.2 Long-term unemployed persons: trend series
- 3.3 Reason for unemployment by industry and occupation of last job

Underutilised labour

- 4.1 Labour underutilisation: Australia population counts and rates
- 4.2 Labour underutilisation: age and state rates
- 4.3 Part-time workers: whether preferred to work more hours
- 4.4 Persons not in the labour force: whether looking for work

Earnings

- 5.1 Wage cost index

- 5.2 Average weekly earnings: trend series
- 5.3 Compensation of employees and related measures: trend series

Industrial Relations

- 6.1 Industrial disputes: working days lost
- 6.2 Industrial disputes: working days lost per 1,000 employees

Job vacancies

- 7.1 Job vacancies

About this Release

ABOUT THIS RELEASE

Replaces: Labour Force, Australia 6203.0

This publication is the flagship release for all ABS labour statistics. It draws together data from a range of sources, mostly ABS household and business surveys, to provide an overall picture of the labour market. The key purpose of this publication is to raise awareness of the data available, so that users will be able to use it more effectively.

It contains tables for core data items, presenting the most recent data available at a particular date (rather than relating to a particular reference period). It is also able to be used to announce the release of supplementary surveys and infrequent surveys. Note that, in addition to a brief article in this publication, these would also have separate releases, which would not be delayed by the release in this publication.

The publication is also used to release annual data on Indigenous labour force status, and annual supplementary measures of labour underutilisation. It includes a range of feature articles, both analytical and technical, which will assist users in understanding and interpreting the data and will also promote the range of data available from the ABS labour statistics program. It will be used to announce any changes to labour series or releases.

The publication contains brief explanatory notes, outlining each data source, but referring to the relevant releases, and to Labour Statistics: Concepts, Sources and Methods 6102.0, for more detail.

Spotlight on Multiple Job Holders (Feature Article)

Feature Article - Spotlight on Multiple Job Holders

This article was published in the October 2003 issue of **Australian Labour Market Statistics** (cat. no. 6105.0).

INTRODUCTION

Data from the July 2003 Labour Force Survey (LFS) showed that almost 6% of employed persons (549,800 persons) were multiple job holders - people who worked in more than one job during the survey reference week, or who held a second job from which they were absent. While multiple job holders continue to comprise only a relatively small proportion of all employed persons, this proportion is increasing.

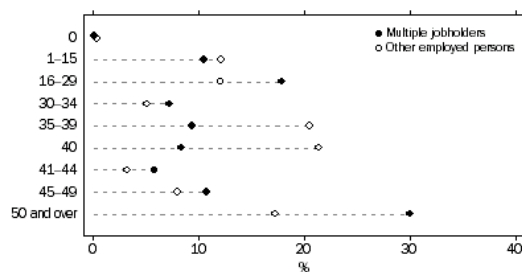


The age and sex profile of multiple job holders is largely consistent with that of other employed persons (i.e. persons with one job). However, employed females are more likely to have more than one job than employed males and, since 1998, female multiple job holders have outnumbered males in absolute terms as well. In July 2003, 7% of employed females (296,200 persons) had more than one job, compared with 5% of employed males (253,600 persons).

HOURS WORKED

On average, multiple job holders tend to work more hours a week than other employed persons. In July 2003, multiple job holders worked an average of 40 hours a week in all jobs, compared with 37 hours for other employed persons.

Employed persons, Hours usually worked in all jobs—July 2003



Sources: Labour Force Survey, July 2003.

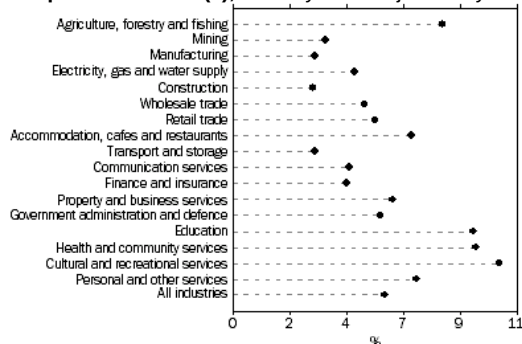
Consistent with overall labour force trends, the number of hours usually worked by male multiple job holders was higher than that for female multiple job holders, with males working an average of 47 hours, compared with 33 hours for females. More than four fifths (84%) of male multiple job holders in July 2003 were employed full-time, compared with 53% of female multiple job holders.

Almost a third (30%) of multiple job holders usually worked 50 or more hours a week, compared with 17% of other employed persons. In July 2003, almost half (46%) of male multiple job holders and 16% of female multiple job holders usually worked 50 hours a week or more, compared with 25% of other employed males, and 7% of other employed females.

INDUSTRY

The LFS provides information on the industry of the main job of multiple job holders in each quarter month (i.e. February, May, August and November). In May 2003, one in ten people whose main job was in the Cultural and recreational services industry were multiple job holders. Other industries with relatively high proportions of multiple job holders were Health and community services (9%), Education (9%) and Agriculture, forestry and fishing (8%).

Multiple Job holders(a), Industry of main job—May 2003



(a) Proportion of all employed persons.
Sources: Labour Force Survey, May 2003.

Information relating to the second job held by multiple job holders is available from the Multiple Jobholding Survey. This survey is conducted on an irregular basis as a supplement to the LFS, and has as its main population of interest employed persons with more than one job who worked as an employee in at least one of their jobs. The most recently available data, from the July 2001 Multiple Jobholding Survey, show that the second jobs held by multiple job holders were most likely to be in the Retail trade (16%), Property and business services (13%), Health and community services (14%), Accommodation, cafes and restaurants (11%) or Agriculture, forestry and fishing (11%) industries. The most common industry for the second job of male multiple job holders was Agriculture, forestry and fishing (15%), while for females it was Health and community services (18%).

Job search experience: methods and barriers in finding jobs (Feature Article)

Feature Article - Job search experience: methods and barriers in finding jobs

This article was published in the April 2004 issue of **Australian Labour Market Statistics** (cat. no. 6105.0).

Introduction

In July 2002, the Job Search Experience survey replaced the separate supplementary surveys Successful and Unsuccessful Job Search Experience (conducted irregularly or biennially from 1986 to 2000) and Job Search Experience of Unemployed Persons (collected annually from 1984 to 2001).

The Job Search Experience survey is conducted annually in July as a supplement to the monthly Labour Force Survey (LFS), collecting data for two main population groups:

- employed persons who started their current job in the previous 12 months, and
- unemployed persons.

Within these groups, the Job Search Experience survey provides information about the way people look for jobs, with particular focus on two key aspects - steps taken to find work, and barriers encountered in finding work. The usual socio-demographic characteristics are also included. Data from the survey are used in analysing labour market behaviour and in formulating labour market assistance policies.

This article briefly illustrates the range of job search information available by focussing on a number of the characteristics collected, using data from the recently released July 2003 survey. Further results may be found in **Job Search Experience, Australia** (cat. no. 6220.0).

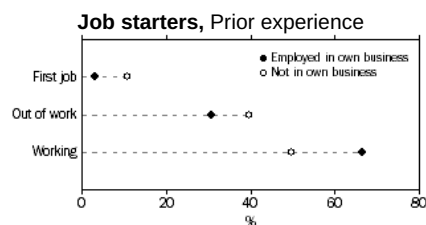
Employed - started job in previous year

In July 2003 there were 1,602,800 employed people who had started their current job since July the year before. These **job starters** represented about 1 in 6 of the total employed population. Just over half (51%) were males.

Nearly two thirds of job starters (65%) were working full-time. About 1 in 8 (12% or 199,600) had started work in their own business (with males in the majority at 62%), while 88% (1,403,200) had started work for an employer other than their own business.

Prior experience

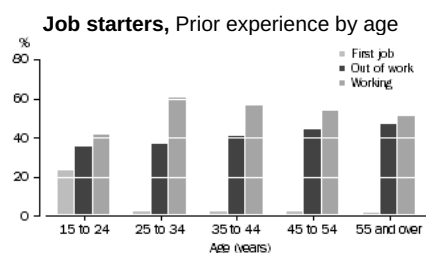
Job starters have been classified into three broad groups based on previous experience in the labour market, as follows: their current job was the first they had ever held (**first job**, in this article); they had worked before but were out of work before starting their current job (**out of work**); they had been working and had either changed employers or started their own business (**working**). Those job starters classified as 'first job' or 'out of work' were not necessarily unemployed prior to starting their current job. They may have been outside the labour force - for example, having already found a job, but not being available to start work earlier.



While about 10% of all job starters had started their first job, 38% had been out of work before starting their current job, but had worked before. The remainder (829,100 or 52% of job starters) had already been working (e.g. they changed employer or left a job to start their own business).

Age of job starters

About a quarter (23%) of job starters aged 15 to 24 years were in their first job. Overall, this age group made up 84% of job starters in their first job.



The proportion of job starters who were out of work prior to starting their current job increased with age, from 35% of persons aged 15 to 24 years to 47% of persons aged 55 and over, while the proportion who changed jobs (while continuing to work) declined after age group 25 to 34 years.

Job starters not in own business

Of the 1.4 million job starters who had started working for an employer, 76% had taken steps to obtain their job - referred to in this article as **job starters who approached employers**.

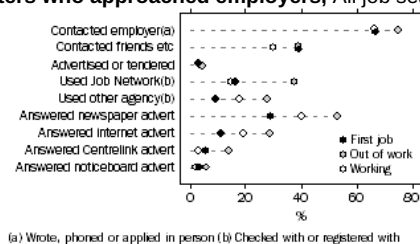
The remaining 24% had not taken steps to look for work but had been approached by their current employer. Job starters already working were most likely to have been approached by their current employer (28% of job starters who changed employers), compared to those not working (19% of those who worked before, and 21% of those starting their first job, were approached by their employer).

Job starters who approached employers

Job search steps

Job starters who approached employers were asked about the steps they may have taken that resulted in getting their current job. As responses were recorded for all steps taken, persons may be counted in more than one category. In this summary, passive searching (only looked in newspapers, for example) has been excluded.

Job starters who approached employers, All job search steps



Over two-thirds (70%) of the job starters who approached employers had contacted employers directly, in writing, by phone, or in person. More than a third (35%) had contacted friends or relatives in attaining their job. While 44% had answered newspaper advertisements for jobs, only 22% had answered Internet advertisements.

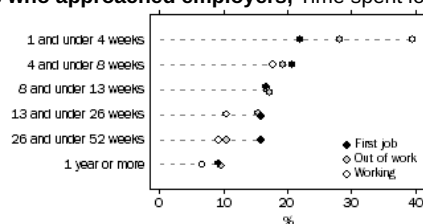
Those job starters who had been out of work but had worked before tended to use more methods to find work, reflected in their generally higher proportions for each method. Compared to job starters in their first job or who had already been working, they were more likely to have contacted employers, to have answered newspaper advertisements, and to have used Job Network or another employment agency.

Time spent looking for work

Job starters who had approached employers were also asked about how long they had spent looking for work (including time spent while working). While having reported taking steps resulting in a job offer, almost a quarter (23%) reported that they did not consider that they had spent time looking for work. Of these 250,100 persons, 75% had been working and had changed employer.

Of the remaining 818,700 job starters, the time spent looking for work varied according to the level of their prior labour market experience, with those seeking their first job most likely to have spent six months or more looking for work. Around one in four (25%) starters in their first job spent six months or more looking for work, and most (85%) were young people aged 15 to 24 years.

Job starters who approached employers, Time spent looking for work



Of those who had been working and changed employer to start their current job, 40% had spent less than 4 weeks looking for work, compared with 29% of those who had been out of work but had worked before, and 22% of those who had taken their first job.

Unemployed

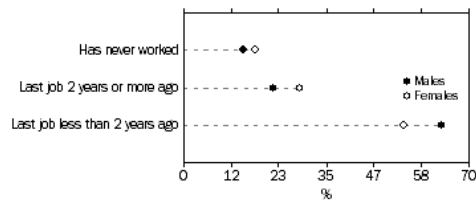
The Job Search Experience survey also obtains a range of information about unemployed persons, including their job search steps, and difficulties in finding work.

Of the 564,500 unemployed persons in July 2003, 55% had been unemployed for 13 weeks or more. Just over one half of the unemployed (55%) were male.

Prior experience

For the unemployed, a measure of prior labour market experience may be defined as follows: whether the person had not previously held a job lasting two weeks or more (**has never worked**, in this article); whether they had previously held a job in the last two years (**last job less than 2 years ago**); or whether they had previously held a job but not in the last two years (**last job 2 years or more ago**).

Unemployed persons, Prior experience

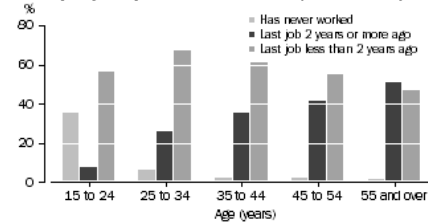


In July 2003, 16% of the unemployed had never worked in a job lasting two weeks or more (and hence were looking for their first job). For one in four (25%) of the unemployed their last job was 2 years or more ago, while 59% had prior employment experience within the last two years.

Age of the unemployed

The proportion of unemployed persons aged 15 to 24 who had never worked was 36%. Persons in this age group made up 85% of the unemployed who had never worked, a similar proportion to that for job starters in their first job (84%).

Unemployed persons, Prior experience by age

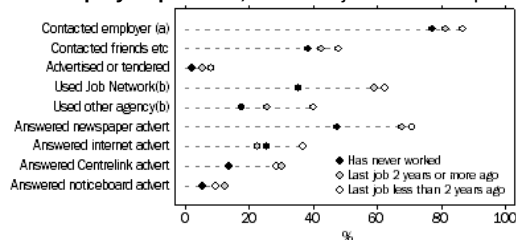


The proportion of the unemployed who had last worked two years or more ago increased steadily with age, from 26% of persons aged 25 to 34 years, to 51% of those aged 55 years and over. The proportion of those with more recent experience (whose last job was less than two years ago) declined with increasing age, after age 25 to 34 years.

Job search steps

Unemployed persons were asked about all the steps they had taken in looking for work. As responses were recorded for all steps taken, persons may be counted in more than one category. In this summary, passive searching (only looked in newspapers, for example) has been excluded.

Unemployed persons, All active job search steps



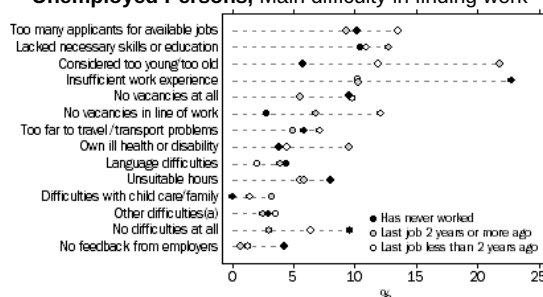
(a) Wrote, phoned or applied in person (b) Checked or registered with

The unemployed generally reported all job search steps at higher rates than job starters. Persons with the most recent experience (with their last job less than 2 years ago) reported higher usage of most job search methods. In contrast, those who had never worked reported lower proportions using most steps (particularly the Job Network and answering job advertisements), as was observed among job starters.

Main difficulty finding work

The Job Search Experience survey records the main difficulty encountered in finding work for those unemployed at the time of the survey, in respect of their current period of unemployment. Information on all difficulties is also collected.

Unemployed Persons, Main difficulty in finding work

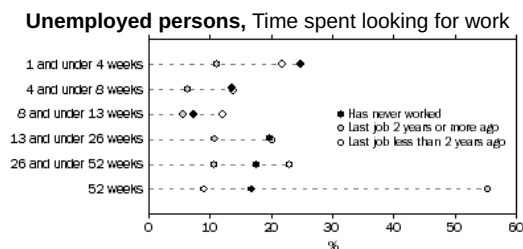


Overall, 13% of the unemployed in July 2003 reported their main difficulty in finding work was having been considered too old or too young by employers. Other common main difficulties reported were 'insufficient work experience' (12%) and 'too many applicants for available jobs' (12%).

The main difficulty most commonly reported for the unemployed who had never worked was insufficient work experience (23%), while nearly 10% reported no difficulties at all. For persons whose last job was two or more years ago, the main difficulty most commonly reported was being considered too young or too old (22%).

Time spent looking for work

The Job Search Experience survey includes a measure of **time spent looking for work**, defined as the number of weeks a person has been both out of work and looking for work at the same time during the preceding 12 months. This may differ from the Labour Force Survey measure of **duration of unemployment** (defined as the shorter of the periods since a person began looking for work, or the person had last worked for two weeks or more) if the person had experienced multiple spells of looking for work during the last year, or had been unemployed for over 12 months.



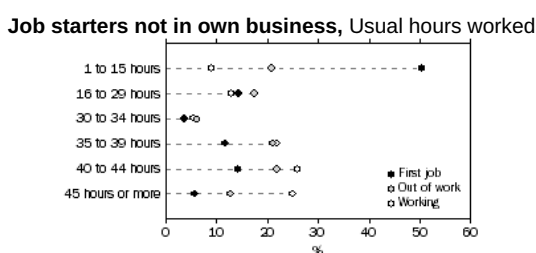
The unemployed who had never worked before were most likely to report looking for less than four weeks (25%). Of the unemployed whose last job was 2 years or more ago, the majority (55%) reported that they spent all of the last year looking for work. The remainder (those spending shorter periods looking) include people seeking to re-enter the labour force after a period of inactivity.

Hours of work

Information about preferred hours of work is obtained for both job starters and the unemployed. The Job Search Experience survey collects information for job starters about **usual hours worked in all jobs** and whether they would **prefer to work more hours**. For the unemployed a related measure was collected, by asking what weekly hours they would have liked to work (**preferred weekly hours**).

Usual hours worked

Job starters employed in their own business tended to work longer hours (48% working 45 hours or more). For those job starters not in their own business who had prior experience (**out of work** or **working**), usual hours equivalent to full-time work (35 hours or more per week) were most likely (65%).

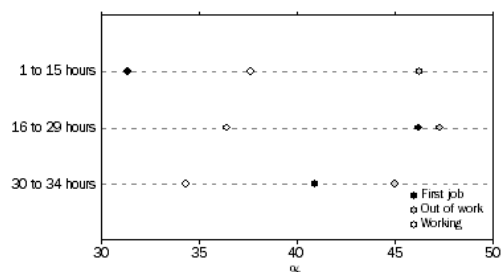


As noted earlier, those in their first job were predominantly young (aged 15 to 24 years). Correspondingly, half of the job starters who had gained their first job usually worked 1 to 15 hours per week, partly reflecting the prevalence of part-time work among 15 to 24 year olds balancing work with study.

Preferred more work

Job starters not in their own business and usually working less than 35 hours per week were also asked whether they would prefer to work more hours.

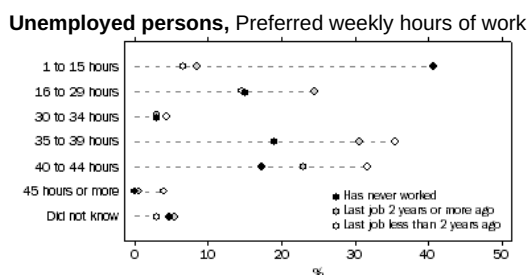
Job starters not in own business, Proportion preferred more hours by usual hours worked



Just under one-third (31%) of job starters in their first job who usually worked from 1 to 15 hours would have preferred to work more hours, the lowest proportion among those usually working less than 35 hours. Compared with other job starters, those who had gained a job after being out of work generally displayed greater preference for working more hours.

Preferred weekly hours

There were marked variations in the weekly hours that the unemployed would have liked to work, depending on prior employment experience.



Of those who had never worked, 41% showed a preference for working 1 to 15 hours per week but most wanted longer hours. As already noted, those who had never worked were predominantly young (aged 15 to 24 years) and the proportion preferring low hours is likely to reflect the need to balance study with work. In comparison, the unemployed with more recent labour market experience were more likely to be wanting to work 35 hours or more per week.

Further information

For further information about the data analysis in this article, contact Linda Fardell, Labour Supply and Conditions Section on Canberra 02 6252 6562. For further information about the Job Search Experience survey, contact Labour Force and Supplementary Surveys Section on Canberra 02 6252 7206.

Spotlight on occupation (Feature Article)

Feature Article - Spotlight on occupation

This article was published in the April 2004 issue of **Australian Labour Market Statistics** (cat. no. 6105.0).

Introduction

This article provides a description of the way in which the ABS classifies occupations, and describes the range of occupation data currently available from the Labour Force Survey (LFS).

The remainder of this spotlight highlights some of the occupation data available from the LFS, including changes to the occupational structure of employment over the last seven years.

Classification of occupations

The ABS defines an occupation as a set of jobs with similar sets of tasks. A job is defined as a set of tasks designed to be performed by an individual employed person. ABS collections use the Australian Standard Classification of Occupations (ASCO) Second Edition to classify jobs into occupations based on **skill level** and **skill specialisation**. The structure of ASCO comprises five hierarchical levels and is described in the table below.

The **skill level** of an occupation is a function of the range and complexity of the set of tasks involved. The greater the range and complexity of the set of tasks, the greater the skill level of the occupation. The ASCO Second Edition measures the skill level of occupations based on the formal education and/or training and previous experience usually required for entry to the occupation.

Skill specialisation is used to group occupations according to type, rather than level of skill. The skill specialisation of an occupation is a function of the field of knowledge required, tools and equipment used, materials worked on, and goods or services provided in relation to the tasks performed.

ASCO CLASSIFICATION STRUCTURE

Level	Number of groups identified	Description
Major groups (1-digit codes)	9	The broadest level of the structure, with groups distinguished from each other on the basis of skill level and, where necessary, the broad concept of skill specialisation.
Sub-major groups (2-digit codes)	35	Subdivisions of the major groups, distinguished from other sub-major groups in the same major group on the basis of broadly stated skill specialisation.
Minor groups (3-digit codes)	81	Subdivisions of the sub-major groups, distinguished from other minor groups in the same sub-major group on the basis of less broadly stated skill specialisation.
Unit groups (4-digit codes)	340	Subdivisions of the minor groups, distinguished from other unit groups in the same minor group on the basis of a finer degree of skill specialisation.
Occupation (6-digit codes)	986	Subdivisions of the unit groups, distinguished from other occupations in the same unit group on the basis of detailed skill specialisation.

Source: ASCO: Australian Standard Classification of Occupations, Second Edition (cat. no. 1220.0).

Changes in classification

Before 1996, occupation data were classified according to the Australian Standard Classification of Occupations First Edition. The change in classification produced a break in series, with ASCO Second Edition used in the LFS from August 1996.

The first edition of the Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations (ANZSCO) is currently in development and is planned for introduction into the LFS and the Census of Population and Housing in 2006.

Labour Force Survey

The LFS collects information on the occupations of employed persons at the ASCO Unit Group (i.e. 4-digit) level. More detailed information on the occupations of employed persons (i.e. at the Occupation, or 6-digit level) is available from the Census of Population and Housing.

Occupation data in the LFS are collected from all employed and recently unemployed persons (those who had worked for at least two weeks in the previous two years) quarterly in February, May, August and November. A comparable time series utilising the ASCO Second Edition is available from August 1996.

Tables 2.3-2.6 of this publication present data on the occupations of employed persons for February 2004. These data are also available in electronic spreadsheets and data cubes as listed in Appendix 1.

Changes in coding methods

Changes implemented in February 2000

The LFS asks employed persons to provide details of the employer or business for which they worked in their main job, and the job title and main tasks they performed in their main job. These details are used to code industry and occupation of main job.

Prior to February 2000, occupation was coded manually using an index containing descriptions of job titles and activities. In February 2000, computer-assisted coding was introduced to the LFS for occupation and industry. As a result of these changes, estimates for the February 2000 survey onwards are not strictly comparable with those for earlier periods.

The new coding method resulted in an estimated increase of 4% for employed Associate professionals, with contributions mainly from Managers and administrators, Professionals, and Intermediate clerical, sales and services workers. In contrast, Elementary clerical, sales and service workers fell by an estimated 4% under the new method, mainly changing to Intermediate clerical, sales and service workers.

The effect on estimates classified by industry was generally higher than that on estimates classified by occupation. For more details on these changes, see the article **Information Paper: Forthcoming Changes: Industry, Occupation and Status in Employment Data** in the May 2000 issue of **Labour Force, Australia** (cat. no. 6203.0), available free on the ABS web site.

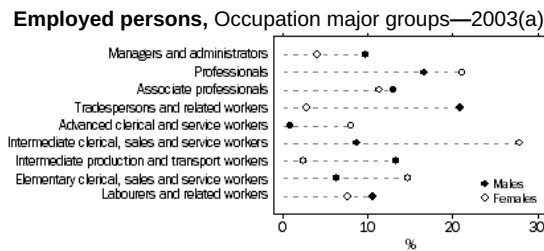
Changes implemented in February 2004

In a small number of cases, responses to the occupation and industry questions are not sufficiently detailed to allow the ABS to code people to the lowest level of these classifications. Since the introduction of computer-assisted coding in 2000, these inadequate responses had been proportionally distributed to the most detailed level of the classifications.

From February 2004, inadequate responses have been coded to 'not further defined' categories at an appropriate level in both the industry and occupation classifications. This change has not affected estimates at the 1-digit level. Estimates were recoded back to August 2000. For more details of this change see **Technical Report: Improvements to labour force estimates** in this issue.

Males and females

In 2003, an estimated 28% of employed females worked in Intermediate clerical, sales and service workers occupations, compared with 9% of employed males. Tradespersons and related workers comprised 21% of employed males on average, compared with 3% of employed females.



(a) Annual average.

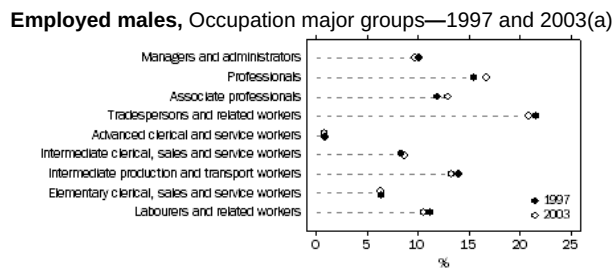
Source: Labour Force Survey.

Changes in occupations over time

The changes in the distribution of occupations at the major group level over the last seven years have been relatively slight, but show some consistent trends even after accounting for the February 2000 coding changes.

Males

Between 1997 and 2003 the proportion of males working as Professionals increased from 15% to 17%, while the proportion working as Associate professionals increased from 12% to 13%. This was offset by a reduction in the proportion of males working as Tradespersons and related workers (from 22% to 21%) and Intermediate production and transport workers (from 14% to 13%).



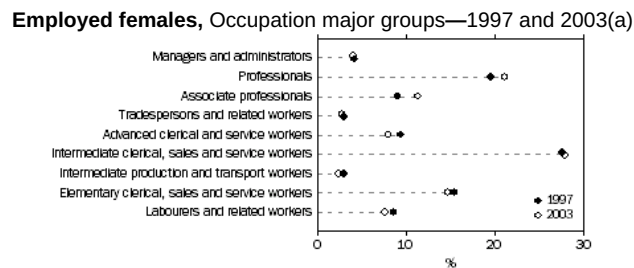
(a) Annual averages.

Note: As a result of changes to coding methods, estimates for the February 2000 survey onwards are not strictly comparable with those for earlier periods.

Source: Labour Force Survey.

Females

As for men, between 1997 and 2003 the proportion of females working as Professionals increased (from 20% to 21%), while the proportion working as Associate professionals increased (from 9% to 11%). However, the occupations that reduced were different, reflecting the different occupational distribution between males and females. There was a reduction in the proportion of females working as Advanced clerical and service workers (from 9% to 8%), and Labourers and related workers (from 9% to 8%).



(a) Annual averages.

Note: As a result of changes to coding methods, estimates for the February 2000 survey onwards are not strictly comparable with those for earlier periods.

Source: Labour Force Survey.

Further information

Spotlight on Parental Leave (Feature Article)

Feature Article - Spotlight on Parental Leave

This article was published in the April 2003 issue of **Australian Labour Market Statistics** (cat. no. 6105.0).

INTRODUCTION

In recent years there has been growing interest in the issue of access to paid parental leave and the length of time before women return to work after the birth of a child. A range of data related to these issues is currently available from the Labour Force Supplementary Survey **Career Experience, Australia** (cat. no. 6254.0). The Career Experience Survey was first conducted in February 1993. The results from the November 2002 survey will be available towards the middle of 2003.

The Career Experience Survey collects data on the duration of leave and type of leave taken by employees (both male and female) with children under six years of age who took a break from work when their youngest child was born. The survey population is limited to persons who were employees in their main job at the time of the survey.

Selected findings from the November 1998 survey are highlighted below. Data relating to this analysis are published in table 13 of **Career Experience, Australia** (cat. no. 6254.0) or are available on request.

TYPE OF BREAK TAKEN

The following table summarises the types of break taken by current employees with children under six years of age who took a break when their youngest child was born. It excludes persons who have not returned to work after their youngest child was born, either because they ceased work and have not returned, or because they are currently still on leave.

Employees(a), Type of break taken when youngest child was born—November 1998

	Males		Females		Persons	
	'000	%	'000	%	'000	%
Paid leave only	347.0	81.5	42.9	16.1	390.0	56.3
Parental leave only	44.3	10.4	36.2	13.6	80.5	11.6
Recreation or holiday	285.2	67.0	*4.7	1.7	289.9	41.9
Sick or carer's	11.8	2.8	*1.0	0.4	12.8	1.9
Long service	*5.7	1.3	*1.0	0.4	*6.7	1.0
Unpaid leave only	45.4	10.7	115.2	43.3	160.7	23.2
Parental leave only	19.0	4.5	86.2	32.4	105.2	15.2
Leave without pay	26.4	6.2	29.0	10.9	55.4	8.0
Combination of leave types or other arrangements	32.0	7.5	61.1	23.0	93.1	13.4
Ceased work	*1.5	0.3	47.0	17.7	48.5	7.0
Total	425.9	100.0	266.4	100.0	692.2	100.0

* estimate is subject to sampling variability too high for most practical purposes

(a) Current employees with children under six years of age who took a break when their youngest child was born. Excludes persons currently away from work.

Source: Career Experience, Australia (cat. no. 6254.0).

In November 1998, there were 692,200 employees with children under six years of age who took a break when their youngest child was born. Over half (56%) of the employees who took a break when their youngest child was born took paid leave only. However, the proportion of men taking paid leave only (82%) was much higher than the proportion of women taking paid leave only (16%).

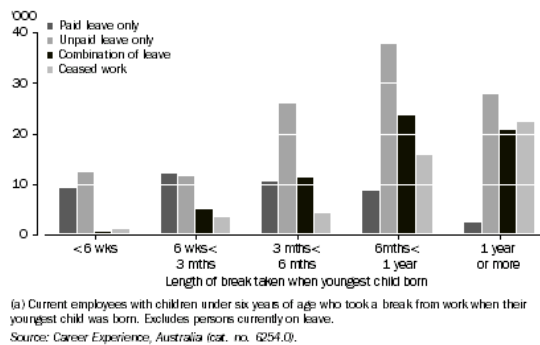
Women were more likely than men to take unpaid leave only (43% compared with 23%) or a combination of types of leave (23% compared with 6%). They were also more likely to cease work, that is, leave their job (18% compared with 1%).

In November 1998, just over one-quarter (27%) of employees with children under six years who took a break when their youngest child was born used parental leave only. More than half (57%) of the parental leave taken was unpaid, while 32% of women used unpaid parental leave only. A further 14% of women used paid parental leave only. About 15% of males used either paid parental leave only (10%), or unpaid parental leave only (5%), when their youngest child was born.

DURATION OF LEAVE

The type of leave taken by men and women is in part associated with the length of leave taken. In November 1998, 96% of current male employees who had taken a break when their youngest child was born were away from work for less than six weeks. This absence was generally taken as paid recreation/holiday leave or paid parental leave. In contrast, only about 8% of current female employees had taken a break of less than six weeks when their youngest child was born.

Employees(a): Females who took a break when youngest child born, Duration and type of break taken — November 1998



Since women generally took longer breaks than men when their youngest child was born, they were more likely to have taken unpaid leave or ceased work. The majority (57%) of current female employees who had taken a break when their youngest child was born were away from work for six months or more. The most common type of leave taken by these women was unpaid leave only (41%), and nearly one-quarter (24%) of them ceased work for the period.

ACCESS TO PAID PARENTAL LEAVE

Information on entitlement to paid maternity/paternity leave was collected for the first time in the 2002 Survey of Employee Earnings, Benefits and Trade Union Membership. This showed that, in August 2002, 30.3% of female employees and 18.8% of male employees were entitled to paid maternity/paternity leave in their main job. For more information on this survey, see the Recent Releases section in this issue, or the publication **Employee Earnings, Benefits and Trade Union Membership, Australia** (cat. no. 6310.0). The new data item will also be available in future from some other supplementary surveys, including Career Experience and Working Arrangements.

Spotlight on Country of Birth (Feature Article)

Feature Article - Spotlight on Country of Birth

This article was published in the October 2003 issue of **Australian Labour Market Statistics** (cat. no. 6105.0).

INTRODUCTION

This article examines the labour market experience of migrants, and how this has changed over time, using data from the Labour Force Survey (LFS). The LFS collects data on country of birth and year of arrival in Australia from those respondents born overseas. Summary data is published in table 1.5 of this publication.

Country of birth information is available at a more detailed level from the Census of Population and Housing. The census data are more suitable for detailed analysis, but are only available every five years, while the LFS data provide a more frequent time series.

Country of birth is classified according to the **Standard Australian Classification of Countries (SACC)** (cat. no. 1269.0). This classification was adopted by the ABS in September 1998, replacing the **Australian Standard Classification of Countries for Social Statistics** (cat. no. 1269.0). Concordances between the two classifications are available.

SOURCE OF MIGRANTS

In the August 2003 LFS, 27% of the civilian population aged 15 and over were born overseas. Of these, 19% arrived in Australia during the period 1996-2003, and for the purposes of this article are referred to as 'recent arrivals'.

Country of birth(a): Original—August 2003

Country of birth	Civilian population aged 15 and over		Unemployment rate	Participation rate
	'000	%	%	%
Born overseas and arrived recently				
Oceania and Antarctica	113.4	13.9	7.4	75.9
New Zealand	89.7	11.0	*5.5	79.1
North-West Europe	113.4	13.9	*3.5	70.9
UK and Ireland	89.0	10.9	*3.4	75.1
Southern and Eastern Europe	61.7	7.6	14.1	56.4
North Africa and the Middle East	50.4	6.2	30.4	38.5
South-East Asia	142.5	17.5	11.7	48.1
North-East Asia	161.2	19.8	13.8	35.6
China (excludes SARs and Taiwan)	89.1	10.9	15.8	37.0
Southern and Central Asia	80.4	9.8	*7.9	66.4
India	42.2	5.2	*7.2	69.0
Sub-Saharan Africa	58.5	7.2	*6.1	75.4
South Africa	34.5	4.2	*4.4	79.7
Americas	34.5	4.2	*10.3	58.8
All recent arrivals(b)	816.1	100.0	9.7	56.9
Born overseas	4,367.0	27.4	5.9	56.8

Born in Australia	11,287.2	70.9	5.5	66.9
Total(c)	15,930.7	100.0	5.6	63.0

* estimate is subject to sampling variability too high for most practical purposes

(a) Classified according to the Standard Australian Classification of Countries (SACC), 1998 (cat. no. 1269.0).

(b) Includes all countries, and persons born at sea.

(c) Includes institutionalised persons, for whom country of birth is not determined.

Source: Labour Force Survey.

In August 2003, 47% of recent arrivals were born in Asia, with 22% born in Europe and 14% born in Oceania and Antarctica. The remaining 18% were born in Sub-Saharan Africa (7%), North Africa and the Middle East (6%), and the Americas (4%). Of the recent arrivals, more were born in New Zealand (11%) than any other individual country.

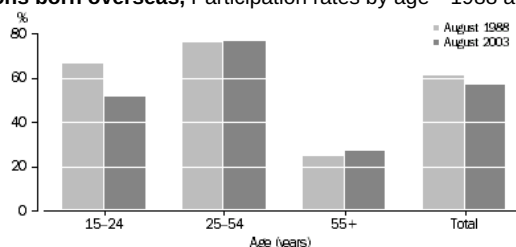
LABOUR FORCE STATUS

In August 2003, recent arrivals had a higher unemployment rate (9.7%) than all migrants (5.9%) or the Australian-born (5.5%). Participation rates were similar for recent arrivals and all migrants (57%), but lower than that for Australian-born residents (67%).

CHANGING EXPERIENCE OVER TIME

Between August 1988 and August 2003, the labour force participation rate of migrants fell from 61% to 57%, largely because of a decline in the participation rate for migrants aged 15-24 years.

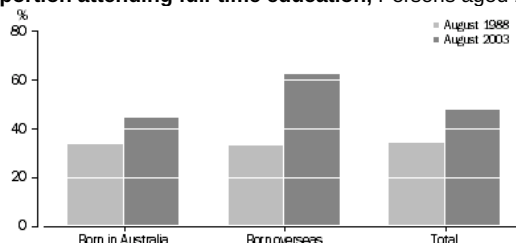
Persons born overseas, Participation rates by age—1988 and 2003



Sources: Labour Force Survey.

This youngest group experienced a drop in their participation rate from 67% to 52%. This is due partly to an increase in the full-time education retention rate in Australia in this age group, and to a large increase in the number of people coming to Australia to study.

Proportion attending full-time education, Persons aged 15-24



Sources: Labour Force Survey.

Between August 1988 and August 2003 the proportion of migrants aged 15-24 years who were attending full-time education almost doubled, from 33% to 62%. In August 2003 the labour force participation rate for migrants aged 15-24 years in full-time education was 33%, compared with 83% for those not in full-time education.

Trade Union Membership (Feature Article)

Feature Article - Trade Union Membership

This article was published in the April 2004 issue of **Australian Labour Market Statistics** (cat. no. 6105.0).

Introduction

Trade unions are organisations that represent employees in the collective negotiation of rates of pay and conditions of employment for their members. The ABS has been producing survey estimates of the number of trade union members annually since 1992, and periodically going back to 1976. The latest results, for August 2003, are available in **Employee Earnings, Benefits and Trade Union Membership** (cat. no. 6310.0). Prior to 1976, estimates of trade union members were obtained from various sources, including trade unions themselves, and a series is available back to the early 1900s.

This article presents information on trade union membership focussing on a number of socio-demographic and labour force characteristics of trade union members. In this article, the trade union membership rate (also referred to as the **unionisation rate**) is defined as the number of trade union members expressed as a percentage of the number of employees. The analyses undertaken are an update on those from an article entitled 'Trends in Trade Union Membership', published in **Australian Social Trends, 1994** (cat. no. 4102.0). An article entitled 'A century of change in the Australian labour market', published in **Year Book Australia, 2001** (cat. no. 1301.0), provides historical data on trade union membership.

Changes in trade union membership rates

In August 2003 there were 1,866,700 employees who were members of a trade union, a 2% increase from August 2002. However, the number of trade union members in 2003 was 26% lower than 15 years earlier. The trade union membership rate has also declined over the same period, from 42% in 1988 to 23% in 2003. The trend away from unionisation in Australia in recent decades has also been shared internationally by countries with similar economies to Australia's.



In part, the decline in trade union membership in Australia is due to changes in the composition of the labour market, with job growth tending to occur in industries (particularly in the services sector) where the trade union membership rate has always been relatively low. Conversely, there has been a decline in jobs in industries that were traditionally highly unionised, such as mining and manufacturing. Coinciding with these changes has been an increase in casual and part-time employment, both of which have tended to have lower unionisation rates.

While compositional change in the Australian labour market has contributed to some of the decline, the trade union membership rate has also fallen within individual industries and occupations, and within full-time and part-time employment groups. This general decline in trade union membership rates may reflect the substantial changes to the industrial relations environment in recent times. Since the late 1980s, the Australian industrial relations system has been characterised by more decentralised arrangements for labour-employer bargaining. The emphasis on decentralised bargaining and the opening up of both collective and individual bargaining to workers not represented by unions have reduced the role of unions in the wage negotiation process. Other changes at this time were the restriction of Federal awards to certain allowable matters, and the exclusion of union preference clauses from awards. These changes may have led to a shift in employee attitudes towards trade unions and their role in the workplace.

Industry compositional change

Between 1993 and 2003, the trade union membership rate declined in all industries. In 2003, the unionisation rate was highest in Electricity, gas and water supply, at 54%, although this was down from 72% in 1993. The lowest unionisation rate was in Agriculture, forestry and fishing, at 5% in 2003, down from 10% in 1993. The largest decrease in the trade union membership rate was in the Communication services industry, from 74% in 1993 to 31% in 2003.

Table 1, Industry of employees

	1993		2003	
	Employees %	Unionisation rate %	Employees %	Unionisation rate %
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	2.1	10.1	2.2	5.2
Mining	1.3	55.2	0.9	29.1
Manufacturing	15.6	43.5	12.5	25.7
Electricity, gas and water supply	1.5	71.5	1.0	53.7
Construction	5.0	35.1	6.0	26.5
Wholesale trade	7.1	16.5	4.9	8.5
Retail trade	13.6	22.3	15.5	17.3
Accommodation, cafes and restaurants	4.6	21.2	5.2	8.7
Transport and storage	4.4	58.6	4.5	38.2
Communication services	1.9	73.8	1.9	31.2
Finance and insurance	4.5	44.8	4.0	18.7
Property and business services	7.7	18.8	11.6	7.0
Government administration and defence	6.3	56.4	5.0	38.4
Education	8.8	56.3	8.3	41.8
Health and community services	10.3	38.7	10.6	29.8
Cultural and recreational services	1.9	31.7	2.3	13.3
Personal and other services	3.4	38.8	3.6	28.7
Total	100.0	37.6	100.0	23.0

There were substantial changes in the industry composition of the workforce between 1993 and 2003. The Retail trade and Property and business services industries, both industries with relatively low rates of unionisation, experienced the largest increases in their shares of employment between 1993 and 2003. In contrast, the Electricity, gas and water supply and Education industries, which had the highest unionisation rates in 2003, had a smaller share of employment in 2003 than 1993.

Sectoral change

In August 2003, the trade union membership rate for public sector employees (47%) was more than double that for the private sector (18%). For both the public and private sectors, trade union membership rates declined over the period 1993 to 2003, falling from 64% for the public sector in 1993, and from 28% in the private sector.

Table 2, Sector of employees

	1993		2003	
	Employees %	Unionisation rate %	Employees %	Unionisation rate %
Public sector	27.3	64.4	18.6	46.9
Private sector	72.7	27.5	81.4	17.7
Total	100.0	37.6	100.0	23.0

Between 1993 and 2003, the share of employees in the public sector fell from 27% to 19%. This change, in part, results from the privatisation of public enterprises, as well as from the outsourcing of activities from the public sector to the private sector.

Types of employment

In 2003, the trade union membership rate was higher for employees with leave entitlements (29%) and full-time employees (26%) than for employees without leave entitlements (9%) and part-time employees (17%). A high proportion of employees without leave entitlements work part-time (65% in 2003).

Table 3, Types of employment of employees

	1993		2003	
	Employees %	Unionisation rate %	Employees %	Unionisation rate %
With leave entitlements	77.3	43.9	72.4	28.5
Without leave entitlements	22.7	16.0	27.6	8.6
Total	100.0	37.6	100.0	23.0
Full-time employees	75.7	42.1	70.3	25.7
Part-time employees	24.3	23.6	29.7	17.0

Between 1993 and 2003, the trade union membership rate declined for employees with and without leave entitlements, and employees working full-time and part-time. In the same period, there had also been an increase in the types of employment (without leave entitlements and part-time) that had lower rates of unionisation.

Occupations

From 1998 to 2003, the trade union membership rates declined for all occupation groups. In 2003, Intermediate production and transport workers recorded the highest trade union membership rate at 38%. The lowest trade union membership rate was 11%, for Managers and administrators and Advanced clerical and service workers.

Table 4, Occupation of employees

	1998(a)		2003	
	Employees %	Unionisation rate %	Employees %	Unionisation rate %
Managers and administrators	5.3	13.4	5.9	11.0
Professionals	19.0	32.3	19.3	28.1
Associate professionals	9.6	23.6	11.6	17.0
Tradespersons and related workers	12.1	33.4	11.6	30.0
Advanced clerical and service workers	4.6	13.6	3.9	11.4
Intermediate clerical, sales and service workers	18.7	23.2	19.1	18.1
Intermediate production and transport workers	9.4	44.4	8.5	37.5
Elementary clerical, sales and service workers	11.1	26.0	11.2	20.8
Labourers and related workers	10.3	28.8	8.9	23.6
Total	100.0	28.1	100.0	23.0

(a) The comparison for occupation groups has been presented over a five-year period (1998 to 2003), due to changes in the occupation classification in August 1996.

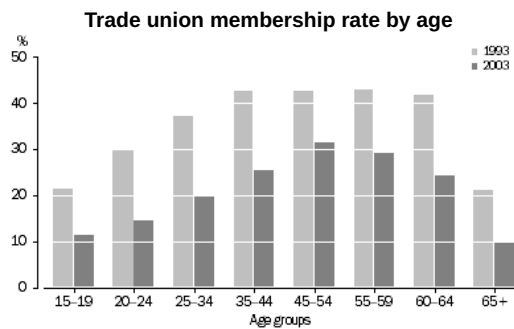
The highest rate of growth in the number of employees between 1998 and 2003 occurred for Associate professionals (36%) and Managers and administrators (25%), both of which had lower than average trade union membership rates. The occupation groups with the highest trade union membership rates - Intermediate production and transport workers, and Tradespersons and related workers - experienced declines in their shares of employment.

Age and sex

In 2003, the trade union membership rate for males (24%) was slightly greater than the rate for females (22%). The lower rate for women may reflect the higher proportion of women who are employed part-time or in lowly unionised industries and occupations.

The trade union membership rate also varied between age groups. Unionisation rates were lowest for younger and older persons, who are more likely to be in casual and part-time employment.

Over the past decade, the unionisation rate has decreased for all age groups, but the rate of decrease has varied between groups. In 1993, the unionisation rate was highest for employees aged 35 to 65, whereas, in 2003, it was highest for employees aged 45 to 59. The increase in the ages at which the rate is high may indicate that there is a cohort of people who are more likely to be trade union members. That is, employees now aged 45 and over (who were aged 35 and over in 1993) may be more likely to be union members, while those who have joined the labour force more recently, since changes in the industrial relations environment have occurred, may be less likely to be members.



Compositional change

Some of the decline in the trade union membership rate over the last decade can be explained by compositional change in the Australian labour market. However, as noted earlier, unionisation rates have fallen within sector, industry and employment types, indicating that other influences were also involved.

Standardised rates have been calculated to quantify the proportion of decline that can be attributed to compositional change. For each factor of interest, the standardised rate for 2003 was calculated by applying the 2003 unionisation rates to the 1993 (base year) employee distribution. An estimate of the proportion of the decline explained by the change in composition of that factor was then calculated by taking the difference between the standardised and unstandardised rates for 2003, as a proportion of the difference between the 1993 rate and the 2003 (unstandardised) rate.

Table 5, Factor standardised trade union membership rate

Factor	2003 standardised rate(a) %	Proportion of union membership decline explained by factor(b) %
Industry	24.0	6.9
Sector	25.7	18.5
With/without leave entitlements	24.0	6.9
Full-time and part-time	23.6	4.1
Age	22.5	-3.4
Sex	23.1	0.7
Unstandardised	23.0	-

- nil or rounded to zero (including null cells)

(a) Standardised to 1993 composition for each factor.

(b) Proportions are not additive because of correlations between factors. Period is 1993 to 2003.

The difference between the unstandardised rate and the standardised rate for sector (2.7 percentage points) shows that the change in public/private sector composition explained 18% of the 14.6 percentage point decline in the trade union membership rate (from 37.6% to 23.0%) over the period. This was more than any of the other compositional factors included in the analysis. Changes in industry structure and the proportion of employees without leave entitlements each accounted for 7% of the decline, while changes in the proportion of employees working part-time accounted for 4% of the decline.

The changes in the age and sex structure of employees accounted for little of the decline in the trade union membership rate. In fact, the ageing of the population had a positive effect on the unionisation rate, with an increase in age groups with relatively high rates. Persons aged 45 years and over were more likely than average to be trade union members in both 1993 (42% unionisation rate) and 2003 (30%), and the proportion of employed people aged 45 and over increased from 25% in 1993 to 32% in 2003.

Overall, while compositional changes accounted for some of the decline in the trade union membership rate, most of the decrease was due to the decreasing unionisation rate within each category of employees (including within each age group, occupation and industry). At the time of the earlier analysis published in 1994, compositional changes had a much greater role in explaining the decline in trade union membership, possibly reflecting the fact that the changes to the industrial relations environment were still being introduced and their full impact had not yet been reflected in trade union membership rates.

Further information

For further information about the data analysis in this article, contact Carolyn O'Rourke, Labour Demand and Earnings Section on Canberra 02 6252 6209. For further information about the Employee Earnings, Benefits and Trade Union Membership Survey, contact Labour Force and Supplementary Surveys Section on Canberra 02 6252 7206.

Improvements to Labour Force estimates (Feature Article)

Feature Article - Improvements to Labour Force estimates

This article was published in the April 2004 issue of **Australian Labour Market Statistics** (cat. no. 6105.0).

Introduction

The monthly Labour Force Survey (LFS) is one of the most important ABS labour collections, providing timely information on labour market activity within Australia. The statistics of most interest each month are estimates of the number of employed and unemployed, the unemployment rate and the labour force participation rate.

The LFS estimates released for February 2004 incorporated a number of changes to unit record data:

- implementation of revised population benchmarks
- introduction of regional population benchmarks
- revision of historical unit record data for definitional changes introduced with the new LFS questionnaire in April 2001
- implementation of a minor change to the definition of unemployment involving the treatment of future starters not actively looking for work, and
- a change to coding of industry and occupation.

All of these revisions flow through to published original series, and some flow through to seasonally adjusted and trend estimates.

Implementation of revised population benchmarks

LFS estimates of persons employed, unemployed and not in the labour force are calculated in such a way as to add up to independent estimates of the civilian population aged 15 and over (**population benchmarks**).

The benchmarks are based on Census of Population and Housing data, adjusted for differences in scope, under-enumeration in the Census, and updated monthly for births, deaths, interstate and intrastate migration, and net permanent and long-term overseas migration. Benchmarks are classified by state/territory of usual residence, part of state of usual residence (capital city/balance of state), age and sex. Each cross-classification of these benchmark variables is known as a benchmark cell.

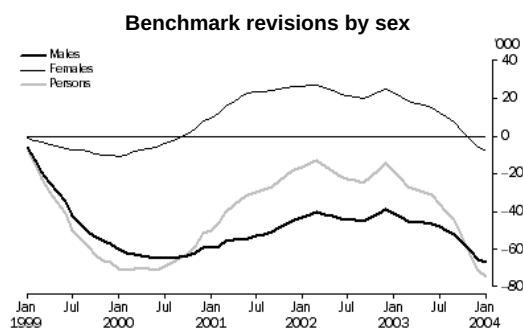
Expansion factors, or weights, are applied to the survey's sampled respondents to derive estimates that relate to the whole population in the scope of the survey each month. Each sample respondent is allocated a weight depending on their benchmark cell and state/territory of enumeration.

LFS estimates for each characteristic of interest are formed by summing the weights of the respondents in the sample with that characteristic. The weighting procedure reduces sampling variability by ensuring that estimates conform to the benchmark distribution of the usually resident civilian population by age, sex and geographic area, while simultaneously compensating and adjusting for any under-enumeration or non-response in the survey.

Every five years, LFS estimates are revised when updated benchmarks become available from the Census of Population and Housing. From February 2004, LFS estimates are being compiled using revised population benchmarks based on results from the 2001 census. LFS estimates for the period January 1999 to January 2004 have been revised based on the updated population benchmarks.

Data prior to January 1999 were not revised because the effects on survey estimates were too small to warrant revision.

The civilian population aged 15 years and over has been revised downward, by no more than 0.5% in any month, for the period January 1999 to January 2004. The largest revision to the civilian population (-74,800) was in January 2004, as shown in the following graph.



Male population benchmarks have been revised downward for the entire period (to a maximum of 0.9%), the largest revision being -67,100 in January 2004. In contrast, female population benchmarks have been predominantly revised upward (to a maximum of 0.3%), with the largest revision being +27,400 in March 2002.

Changes to civilian population benchmarks are not uniform across age groups. Benchmarks for age groups in the 20-29 year range have

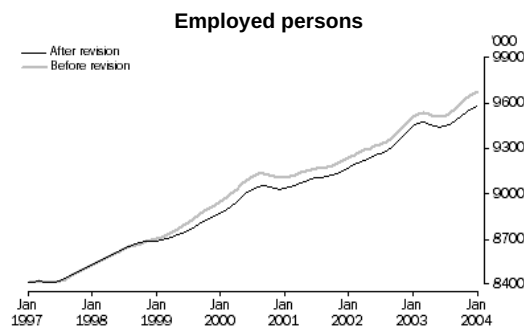
decreased significantly, with the largest decrease being 162,800 in January 2004. People in the 20-29 year age group have relatively high labour force participation rates. Benchmarks for older age groups have generally increased, but these increases only partly offset the falls in the younger age groups. The largest increase in the older age groups is for persons aged 65 years and over, an age group with a very low labour force participation rate.

As a result of the benchmark changes, over the period January 1999 to January 2004:

- employed persons have been revised down by an average of 66,300
- unemployed persons have been revised down by an average of 8,100
- the unemployment rate has been revised down by an average of 0.03 percentage points, and
- the participation rate has been revised down by an average of 0.32 percentage points.

Unemployed persons, the unemployment rate, and the participation rate are also affected by the definitional change involving future starters. See the relevant section below.

Because of age compositional effects, the downward revision to employment estimates is larger than the downward revision to the civilian population, with the largest revision being -100,200 for the January 2004 estimate. The graph below compares trend estimates for the period January 1999 to January 2004 before and after the revisions.



Regional population benchmarks

While the LFS is designed primarily to produce reliable estimates at the national, state and territory levels, it also delivers estimates for employed persons and unemployed persons for a number of regions (Labour Force Statistical Regions) within states.

Prior to February 2004, population benchmarks in the LFS were classified by state/territory of usual residence, capital city/rest of state, age and sex. In addition to these, LFS data from February 2004 use population benchmarks for labour force region by sex.

Historically, estimates at the regional level have shown a high degree of variability relative to state and part of state estimates. This is because regional estimates are subject to larger impacts of sampling variability, in that the weighted estimates reflect both the distribution of the sample selected (and not an independent population benchmark) and the characteristics of the sample selected. The larger impact of sampling variability leads to larger month to month variation and higher standard errors for these regional estimates.

Implementing population benchmarks for statistical regions reduce the variability of regional estimates, without compromising the quality of estimates at national, state and territory levels. However, the variability inherent in having a relatively small sample at the regional level will remain.

LFS estimates at the regional level have been revised based on population benchmarks for Labour Force Statistical Regions for the period January 1999 to January 2004.

April 2001 definitional changes

In April 2001, the ABS revised historical estimates for core labour force series resulting from two definitional changes made during the introduction of the new LFS questionnaire. The two definitional changes made were:

- people on short-term unpaid leave initiated by the employer (that is, people stood down for less than four weeks without pay) were classified as employed rather than as unemployed
- people who were unavailable to start work in the reference week due to temporary illness were classified as not in the labour force rather than as unemployed.

While core labour force series were revised in 2001 for these two definitional changes, the revisions were not made at the unit record level. This meant that other aggregates produced from unit record data did not reconcile with the core series that were directly revised.

In February 2004, unit record data were revised for these definitional changes. Core series that were revised in April 2001 were not affected by this change.

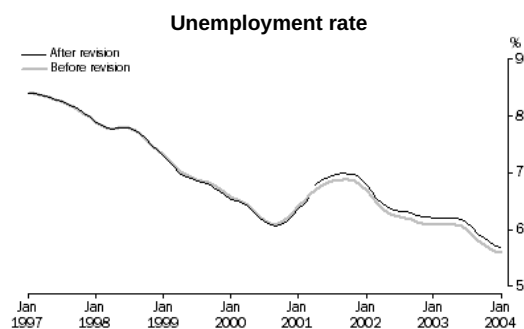
For more information on these definitional changes refer to **Information Paper: Implementing the Redesigned Labour Force Survey Questionnaire** (cat. no. 6295.0).

Definitional change for future starters

In February 2004, the ABS introduced a minor change to the definition of unemployed persons. The change relates to a small group of persons ('future starters') who had not actively looked for work because they were waiting to start a new job within four weeks from the end of the survey reference week, and could have started in the reference week if the job had been available then. Prior to February 2004, these persons were classified as not in the labour force. They have now been classified as unemployed, in line with International Labour Organisation guidelines.

Data to support this change has been available since the new LFS questionnaire was introduced in April 2001. However, the ABS announced at the time that, due to concerns that such a change could result in a break in some core labour force series, implementation of the change would be deferred until February 2004. LFS estimates have been revised back to April 2001 to reflect this change. Around 15,000 persons per month (on average) have been reclassified from **not in the labour force** to **unemployed**. This revision creates a small trend break at April 2001 in unemployed persons and unemployment rate series.

The effect of the definitional change on the unemployment rate is to revise it upwards by an average of 0.15 percentage points over the period from April 2001. When combined with the downward effects of the revised population benchmarks, the unemployment rate has been revised upwards over this period by an average of 0.11 percentage points. The graph below compares trend estimates of the unemployment rate for the period January 1999 to January 2004 before and after both sets of revisions.



The effect of the definitional change on the participation rate is to revise it upwards by an average of 0.10 percentage points over the period from April 2001. When combined with the downward effects of the revised population benchmarks, the participation rate has been revised downwards over this period by an average of 0.27 percentage points.

Change to coding of industry and occupation

Every three months, respondents to the LFS who are employed or unemployed are asked a series of questions which are used to code industry and occupation. In a small number of cases, responses to these questions are not sufficiently detailed to allow the ABS to code people to the lowest level of these classifications. Since the introduction of computer assisted coding in 2000, these responses had been proportionally distributed to the most detailed level of the classifications.

From February 2004, these insufficiently detailed responses have been coded to 'not further defined' categories at an appropriate level in both the industry and occupation classifications.

Industry and occupation series have been revised back to August 2000 to include these 'not further defined' categories. Industry estimates at the Division (1-digit) level and occupation estimates at the Major Group (1-digit) level are unchanged.

Tables in **Information Paper: Forthcoming Changes to Labour Force Statistics** (cat. no. 6292.0) demonstrate the impact that this change had on the May 2003 industry estimates at the Subdivision (2-digit) level, and occupation estimates at the Sub-Major Group (2-digit) level.

Further information

The first estimates incorporating the revisions to LFS unit record data described in this paper were released with the February 2004 issue of **Labour Force, Australia** (cat. no. 6202.0), released on 11 March 2004. Electronic products (cat. no. 6202.0.55.001) associated with that publication also contained revised data.

In addition, more detailed products associated with the second release of LFS data (cat. no. 6291.0.55.001) were re-issued on 11 March 2004 containing revised data up to, and including, January 2004. Second release products, including February 2004 estimates, were released on 18 March 2004, in accordance with the standard timetable.

For further information about the implementation of any of these changes, contact Peter Bradbury on Canberra 02 6252 6565, or via email on peter.bradbury@abs.gov.au.

Spotlight on Methods of Setting Pay (Feature Article)

Feature Article - Spotlight on Methods of Setting Pay

This article was published in the April 2003 issue of **Australian Labour Market Statistics** (cat. no. 6105.0).

INTRODUCTION

The last decade has seen a move away from a centralised system of awards to set pay levels and increases, towards agreements at the enterprise, workplace and individual levels. Information on how employees' pay is set has been collected in the biennial Survey of Employee Earnings and Hours (EEH) since 2000. This article uses estimates from the 2000 and 2002 surveys.

Three different methods of setting pay are identified in the EEH: awards, collective agreements and individual agreements. Employees are classified to one of these categories based on how their pay was set in May of the survey year.

METHODS OF SETTING PAY

Collective agreements, which include enterprise and workplace agreements, are agreements between one or more employers and a group of employees (or associations representing employees) that set the terms of employment, including pay, for a group of employees. The agreements may be either registered with an industrial tribunal or authority, or be unregistered. In May 2002, 38% of employees had the main part of their pay set by collective agreements (37% in May 2000).

Individual agreements set the terms of employment for an individual employee and are agreed to by the individual rather than on behalf of the individual. The agreement may be verbal or written, and registered or unregistered. Employees whose pay is set by individual agreements include those whose pay is set by an individual common law contract, employees receiving pay at more than the award rate by individual agreement, and working proprietors of incorporated enterprises who set their own rate of pay. In May 2002, 41% of employees had the main part of their pay set by individual agreements (40% in May 2000).

Awards are legally enforceable determinations made by federal or state industrial tribunals that set the terms of employment, including pay. Employees whose pay is set by 'award only' are those who are covered by awards and whose pay is set at exactly the award rate of pay without reference to an individual or collective agreement. In May 2002, 20% of employees were in this category (23% in May 2000).

SECTOR

Methods of setting pay, by sector—May 2002

Sector		Awards only %	Collective agreements %	Individual agreements %
Males	Private sector	17.7	25.8	56.6
	Public sector	4.0	88.5	7.6
	All sectors	15.1	37.3	47.5
Females	Private sector	32.2	24.1	43.7
	Public sector	5.1	90.9	4.0
	All sectors	26.1	39.2	34.7
Persons	Private sector	24.6	25.0	50.5
	Public sector	4.6	89.8	5.6
	All sectors	20.5	38.2	41.3

Source: Employee Earnings and Hours, Australia, May 2002 (cat. no. 6306.0).

Just on half (50%) of all private sector employees had their pay set by individual agreements in May 2002. The other half were evenly split between those whose pay was set at the award rate and those whose pay was set by collective agreements (25% each). In contrast, collective agreements set the pay for the majority of public sector employees (90%).

OCCUPATION

Individual agreements and collective agreements were more prevalent in higher skilled occupation groups than in lower skilled occupation groups. Of employees classified as Managers and administrators, 79% had their pay set by individual agreements and 21% by collective agreements in May 2002. For lower skilled occupation groups, such as Elementary clerical, sales and service workers, a relatively high proportion of employees had their pay set at the award rate without reference to individual or collective agreements (41%). This compares with 35% of employees in this occupation group who had their pay set by collective agreements.

Methods of setting pay, by occupation—May 2002

Occupation	Award only %	Collective agreement %	Individual agreement %
Managers and administrators	*0.4	20.5	79.1
Professionals	7.4	55.7	36.9

Associate professionals	6.1	37.7	56.2
Tradespersons and related workers	25.7	27.9	46.4
Advanced clerical and service workers	12.1	24.4	63.4
Intermediate clerical, sales and service workers	25.2	35.1	39.7
Intermediate production and transport workers	17.7	46.1	36.2
Elementary clerical, sales and service workers	41.5	35.2	23.3
Labourers and related workers	34.4	38.1	27.5
All occupations	20.5	38.2	41.3

* estimate is subject to sampling variability too high for most practical purposes
Source: Employee Earnings and Hours, Australia, May 2002 (cat. no. 6306.0).

FURTHER INFORMATION

Further information can be found in **Employee Earnings and Hours, Australia, May 2002** (cat. no. 6306.0), which was released on 26 March 2003. The publication provides statistics on the composition and distribution of earnings and hours of wage and salary earners, and how their pay is set. For information about these and related statistics contact Brad Pottinger on Perth 08 9360 5305 or the National Information and Referral Service on 1300 135 070.

Explanatory Notes

Introduction

1 Australian Labour Market Statistics brings together a range of ABS labour statistics to present a statistical summary of the Australian labour market. It has been developed primarily as a reference document, and provides a broad basis for labour analysis and research.

2 In addition to data from the Labour Force Survey (LFS), this publication contains statistics from a range of other ABS labour surveys including Average Weekly Earnings, the Wage Cost Index, Job Vacancies, Employment and Earnings - Public Sector, and Industrial Disputes. The publication also includes summary data from recently released labour force supplementary surveys.

3 This publication also includes international data for selected labour market indicators.

Labour statistics concepts, sources and methods

4 The concepts and definitions underpinning ABS labour statistics align closely with the standards and guidelines set out in Resolutions of the International Conference of Labour Statisticians. Descriptions of the underlying concepts of Australia's labour market statistics, and the sources and methods used in compiling the estimates, are presented in **Labour Statistics: Concepts, Sources and Methods** (cat. no. 6102.0), which is also available on the ABS web site at <https://www.abs.gov.au> (About Statistics - Concepts & Classifications).

5 For an explanation of terms used in this publication, refer to the Glossary.

Labour statistics theme page

6 The Labour Statistics theme page is a portal to all labour statistics and related information residing on the ABS web site. The page contains hyperlinks to **Labour Statistics: Concepts, Sources and Methods** (cat. no. 6102.0); information about labour related surveys including the data items each survey collects and contact details for further assistance; and a help page for respondents to ABS labour related surveys.

Trend estimates

7 Series in this publication include **original** and **trend** series. Special care should be taken in interpreting data for the most recent months and quarters, as some of the original and all of the trend series are subject to revision.

8 It is not uncommon for movements in original time series data and those provided from trend series to differ. Movements in a time series of original data may reflect several factors, including:

- longer-term changes in the item being measured (i.e. trend movements)
- short-term irregular changes
- regular seasonal influences
- normal 'trading', 'working' or 'pay' day patterns
- systematic holiday effects.

9 Trend estimates help the user to identify the underlying magnitude and direction of a time series. Seasonal adjustment removes the effect of the last three listed influences from the data, leaving only trend and short-term irregular movements. Trend estimates are then obtained by removing the effects of the short-term irregularities, which in some series can be a major contributor to movements in the original data.

10 Trend estimates are produced by smoothing the seasonally adjusted series using a statistical procedure based on Henderson moving averages. At each time point in a series, a trend estimate is calculated using a centred x-term Henderson moving average of the seasonally adjusted series. The moving averages are centred on the point in time at which the trend is being estimated. The number of terms used to

calculate the trend varies across surveys. Generally, ABS monthly surveys use a 13-term moving average and quarterly surveys use a 7-term moving average.

11 Estimates for the most recent time points cannot be calculated using the centred average method as there are insufficient data to do so. Instead, alternative approaches that approximate the smoothing properties of the Henderson moving average are used. This can lead to revision in the trend estimates for the most recent time periods until sufficient data are available to calculate the trend using the centred Henderson moving average. Revisions of trend estimates will also occur with revisions to the original data and re-estimation of seasonal adjustment factors.

12 Seasonal factors are reviewed at least annually for ABS labour series, to take account of additional original data. The results of the latest reviews were used to compile the trend estimates given in this publication. For further information about the most recent reviews of seasonal factors for the labour surveys, see the following publications:

- for labour force see **Labour Force, Australia** (cat. no. 6202.0)
- for wage cost index see **Wage Cost Index, Australia** (cat. no. 6345.0)
- for average weekly earnings see **Average Weekly Earnings, Australia** (cat. no. 6302.0)
- for public sector employees see **Wage and Salary Earners, Public Sector, Australia** (cat. no. 6248.0.55.001)
- for job vacancies see **Job Vacancies, Australia** (cat. no. 6354.0).

13 The general methods used in the ABS for estimating trends are described in **Information Paper: A Guide to Interpreting Time Series - Monitoring Trends** (cat. no. 1349.0).

Reliability of estimates

14 Estimates in this publication are subject to two types of error:

- sampling error - errors that occur because the data were obtained from a sample rather than the entire population
- non-sampling error - errors that occur at any stage of a survey and can also occur in a census, e.g. incorrect responses to questions, processing errors, frame deficiencies.

15 For more information on these sources of error, and on measures of these types of errors, including standard errors, refer to the main publications associated with each of the data series presented in this publication (see the relevant sections later in these Explanatory Notes). More information on standard errors applying to LFS estimates is contained in **Information Paper: Labour Force Survey Standard Errors** (cat. no. 6298.0).

Rounding

16 Estimates have been rounded and discrepancies may occur between sums of the component items and totals.

Labour Force Survey Data

Description of the survey

17 Data in tables 1.1-1.7, 2.1-2.10, 3.1-3.3, 4.3 and 4.4 are obtained from the Labour Force Survey (LFS), which provides extensive information about the labour market on a monthly basis. The LFS is a component of the Monthly Population Survey (MPS), which includes the LFS and supplementary surveys.

Monthly Population Survey

18 The MPS is a population survey based on a multi-stage area sample of private dwellings (currently about 30,000 houses, flats, etc.), and list samples of discrete Indigenous communities and non-private dwellings (hospitals, hotels, motels, etc.), and covers about 0.5% of the population of Australia. The information is obtained from occupants of selected dwellings by interviewers, with the first interview conducted face-to-face and subsequent interviews over the telephone. Once selected, households are included for eight consecutive months before being replaced.

Labour Force Survey

19 The LFS has been conducted on a monthly basis since February 1978. Prior to that, from 1964 to 1978, a national survey was conducted quarterly. Telephone interviewing was introduced between August 1996 and February 1997. New questionnaires have been introduced periodically, most recently in April 2001.

20 The LFS includes all usual residents of Australia aged 15 and over except:

- members of the permanent defence forces
- certain diplomatic personnel of overseas governments, customarily excluded from census and estimated population counts
- overseas residents in Australia
- members of non-Australian defence forces (and their dependants) stationed in Australia.

21 From July 1993, Jervis Bay Territory has been excluded from the scope of the LFS.

Supplementary surveys

22 The supplementary surveys collect additional data on a different topic each month. Many topics covered are rotated on an annual or less frequent basis, while others are included once only. Results from each supplementary survey topic are released separately. A list of topics covered in recent years is in Appendix 3.

23 Tables 4.1 and 4.2 contain data from the annual supplementary surveys Underemployed Workers and Persons Not in the Labour Force. These tables are updated annually.

24 The supplementary surveys include a subset of the persons included in the LFS (see paragraph 20). The additional exclusions for most supplementary surveys are:

- persons living in private dwellings in remote and sparsely settled parts of Australia
- institutionalised persons
- boarding school pupils.

Reference period

25 Interviews are generally conducted during the two weeks beginning on the Monday between the 6th and 12th of each month, with questions relating to the week prior to the interview (the reference week).

Notes on data

26 From time to time, changes to survey methodology affect the time series produced. Some examples of changes to this survey are: the introduction of computer-assisted interviewing in 2003-04; new questions added to the LFS questionnaire in April 2001; and the introduction of telephone interviewing in 1996-97.

27 In February 2004 the definition of unemployed persons was changed to include all persons who were waiting to start work and were available to start in the reference week, with consequent revisions to data from April 2001 to January 2004. For further details, see **Information Paper: Forthcoming Changes to Labour Force Statistics** (cat. no. 6292.0).

Population benchmarks

28 LFS estimates of persons employed, unemployed and not in the labour force are calculated in such a way as to add up to independently estimated counts (benchmarks) of the civilian population aged 15 years and over. These benchmarks are based on census data adjusted for under-enumeration and updated for births, deaths, interstate migration, and net permanent and long-term migration. This procedure compensates for under-enumeration in the survey, and leads to more reliable estimates.

29 From February 2004, labour force estimates have been compiled using benchmarks based on the results of the 2001 Census of Population and Housing. Revisions were made to historical estimates from January 1999 to January 2004. These revisions affect original, seasonally adjusted and trend estimates. The next revision is scheduled for February 2009 to take account of the results from the 2006 census.

Families series

30 Family relationship is not determined for all households and persons in scope of the LFS. This is due to a number of factors related to the scope and coverage of the LFS, as well as difficulties in determining family structure and characteristics. The survey questions used to determine family relationships are restricted to persons enumerated as usual residents of private dwellings. That is, the following persons are excluded:

- all persons enumerated in non-private dwellings (including hotels, motels, hospitals and other institutions)
- persons enumerated as visitors to (rather than usual residents of) private dwellings.

31 In addition, in those households where it is not possible to obtain information relating to all the usual residents, no family information is recorded. Thus, persons living in households which include a member of the permanent defence forces, who is outside the scope of the LFS, are excluded from survey questions used to determine family relationships. This also applies to households that, at the time of the survey, had one or more of their usual residents away for more than six weeks, and households from which an incomplete or inadequate questionnaire was obtained for any usual resident in scope of the survey.

Further information and data on the LFS

32 LFS estimates are published monthly in **Labour Force, Australia** (cat. no. 6202.0). A series of time-series spreadsheets are released at the same time as this publication under catalogue number 6202.0.55.001. More detailed estimates are released, in electronic format, one week later, under catalogue number 6291.0.55.001. All electronic data can be accessed via the ABS web site at <https://www.abs.gov.au>. Additional data are available on request.

33 For further information about the range of LFS products and services, and the concepts and methodology used in the LFS, refer to **Information Paper: Changes to Labour Force Survey Products** (cat. no. 6297.0), **Labour Statistics: Concepts, Sources and Methods** (cat. no. 6102.0), or contact the Assistant Director, Labour Force Survey on Canberra 02 6252 6565.

Employer Survey Data

34 Tables 2.11, 5.1-5.3, 6.1-6.2 and 7.1 of this publication contain data from ABS employer surveys.

Scope of employer surveys

35 Except where otherwise noted, the ABS labour employer surveys are selected from the ABS Business Register, which is primarily based on registrations to the Australian Taxation Office's (ATO) Pay As You Go Withholding scheme. The population is updated quarterly to take account of new businesses, business that have ceased employing, changes in employment levels, changes in industry, and other general business changes. Businesses excluded from the scope of the employer surveys are:

- those primarily engaged in Agriculture, forestry and fishing (except for the Survey of Employment and Earnings)
- private households employing staff
- overseas embassies, consulates, etc.
- those located outside Australia.

Job Vacancies Data

36 Table 7.1 contains data from the Job Vacancies Survey (JVS).

Description of the survey

37 The current Job Vacancies Survey has been conducted since November 1983 and is a quarterly sample survey of approximately 4,600 employers. The survey produces estimates of the number of job vacancies in Australia.

Reference date

38 The reference date for the survey is the third Friday of the middle month of the quarter.

Notes on data

39 Prior to the August quarter 1999, job vacancies statistics were collected as part of the Job Vacancies and Overtime Survey. The overtime component of the survey ceased following the May quarter 1999.

Further information

40 For further information about the range of products and services relating to ABS job vacancies statistics, and the concepts and methodology used, refer to **Job Vacancies, Australia** (cat. no. 6354.0), **Labour Statistics: Concepts, Sources and Methods** (cat. no. 6102.0), the associated time series spreadsheets available from the ABS web site, or contact the Manager, Job Vacancies Survey on Perth 08 9360 5304.

Public Sector Employees Data

Description of the survey

41 Data in table 2.11 are obtained from a quarterly survey of public sector businesses: the Survey of Employment and Earnings - Public Sector (SEE). This survey has been conducted on a quarterly basis since the September quarter 1983. The survey measures both the number of public sector wage and salary earners employed in the middle month of each quarter and their total quarterly earnings.

Reference period

42 The reference period for employees is the last pay period ending on or before the third Friday of the middle month of the quarter. The reference period for gross earnings is all pay periods which end within the quarter.

Notes on data

43 The private sector component of the Survey of Employment and Earnings was discontinued after the December quarter 2001.

Further information

44 For further information about the range of products and services relating to public service employees, and the concepts and methodology used, refer to **Wage and Salary Earners, Public Sector, Australia** (cat. no. 6248.0.55.001), **Labour Statistics: Concepts, Sources and Methods** (cat. no. 6102.0), or contact the Manager, Survey of Employment and Earnings, Public Sector on Perth 08 9360 3141.

Average Weekly Earnings Data

45 Table 5.2 contains data from the Survey of Average Weekly Earnings (AWE).

Description of the survey

46 The Survey of Average Weekly Earnings has been conducted quarterly since August 1981. Approximately 4,700 businesses contribute to

the survey each quarter. The purpose of the survey is to measure average gross weekly earnings per employee job in Australia.

47 Average weekly earnings statistics represent average gross (before tax) earnings of employees and do not relate to average award rates nor to the earnings of the 'average person'. Estimates of average weekly earnings are derived by dividing estimates of weekly total earnings by estimates of number of employees. Changes in the averages may be affected not only by changes in the level of earnings of employees but also by changes in the overall composition of the wage and salary earner segment of the labour force.

Reference period

48 The reference period for the survey is the last pay period ending on or before the third Friday of the middle month of the quarter. For non-weekly payrolls, businesses are asked to provide one week's portion.

Further information

49 For further information about the range of products and services relating to average weekly earnings refer to **Average Weekly Earnings, Australia** (cat. no. 6302.0), **Labour Statistics: Concepts, Sources and Methods** (cat. no. 6102.0), the associated time series spreadsheets available from the ABS web site, or contact the Manager, Survey of Average Weekly Earnings on Perth 08 9360 5304.

Wage Cost Index Data

50 Table 5.1 contains data from the **Wage Cost Index, Australia** (cat. no. 6345.0) publication.

Description of the survey

51 The Wage Cost Index (WCI) is a price index which measures changes over time in wage and salary costs for employee jobs, unaffected by changes in the quality or quantity of work performed. Changes in wages and salaries resulting from changes in the composition of the labour market are excluded from the WCI movements. Index numbers have been compiled and published since December quarter 1997 (with a reference base of September quarter 1997 = 100.0). Approximately 19,000 matched jobs from 4,100 qualifying businesses are priced each quarter.

Reference period

52 The reference period for the survey is the last pay period ending on or before the third Friday of the mid-month of the quarter.

Further information

53 For further information about the range of products and services relating to the Wage Cost Index, and the concepts and methodology used, refer to **Wage Cost Index, Australia** (cat. no. 6345.0), **Information Paper: Wage Cost Index, Australia** (cat. no. 6346.0), **Labour Statistics: Concepts, Sources and Methods** (cat. no. 6102.0), the associated time series spreadsheets available from the ABS web site, or contact the Labour Price Index Output Group on Perth 08 9360 5151.

Industrial Disputes Data

54 Tables 6.1 and 6.2 contain data from the Industrial Disputes collection.

Description of the survey

55 The ABS has been collecting information about industrial disputes since 1913. The Industrial Disputes collection produces estimates of the number of industrial disputes (where ten or more working days are lost), employees involved, and working days lost.

56 The scope of the Industrial Disputes collection is restricted to employing businesses at which an industrial dispute has occurred. For this collection, industrial disputes are defined as work stoppages of ten working days or more. Ten working days are equivalent to the amount of ordinary time worked by ten people in one day, regardless of the length of the stoppage, e.g. 3,000 workers on strike for two hours would be counted as 750 working days lost (assuming they work an eight-hour day).

57 Effects on other establishments not directly involved in the dispute, such as stand-downs because of lack of materials, disruption of transport services, power cuts, etc. are not included in the scope of this collection.

Reference period

58 The collection reference period is the calendar month. Data on working days lost are collated and published on a quarterly basis in this publication.

Further information

59 For further information about the range of products and services relating to ABS industrial disputes statistics, and the concepts and methodology used, refer to **Industrial Disputes, Australia** (cat. no. 6321.0), **Labour Statistics: Concepts, Sources and Methods** (cat. no. 6102.0), the associated time series spreadsheets available from the ABS web site, or contact the Manager, Industrial Disputes on Perth 08 9360 5159.

National accounts data

60 Table 5.3 contains data from the Australian National Accounts.

61 Estimates of compensation of employees are contained within the Income Accounts of the Australian National Accounts, which are published in **Australian System of National Accounts** (cat. no. 5204.0) and **Australian Economic Indicators** (cat. no. 1350.0). For further information on how estimates are obtained, see **Australian System of National Accounts: Concepts, Sources and Methods** (cat. no. 5216.0).

International data

62 Table 1.8 contains data from the International Labour Organisation.

63 Estimates of key indicators of the labour markets from various countries have been included for comparison with Australian estimates of labour force participation, employment, unemployment and unemployment rates.

Glossary

Active steps to find work

Includes writing, telephoning or applying in person to an employer for work; answering an advertisement for a job; checking factory noticeboards or the touchscreens at Centrelink offices; being registered with Centrelink as a jobseeker; checking or registering with any other employment agency; advertising or tendering for work; and contacting friends or relatives.

Actual hours worked

The hours actually worked during the reference week, not necessarily hours paid for.

Adult employees

Adult employees are those employees 21 years of age or over and those employees who, although under 21 years of age, are paid at the full adult rate for their occupation.

Aggregate (actual) hours worked

The total number of hours a group of employed persons has actually worked during the reference week, not necessarily hours paid for.

Attending full-time education

Persons aged 15-24 years who were enrolled full-time at secondary school, high school, Technical and Further Education (TAFE) college, university, or other educational institution in the reference week.

Average compensation per employee

National Accounts. The total compensation of employees divided by the number of employees.

Average earnings (National Accounts basis)

See **average compensation per employee**.

Average hours worked

Aggregate hours worked by a group divided by the number of persons in that group.

Average weekly earnings

Average weekly earnings represent average gross (before tax) earnings of employees and do not relate to average award rates nor to the earnings of the 'average person'. Estimates of average weekly earnings are derived by dividing estimates of weekly total earnings by estimates of number of employees. For information about scope exclusions applying to employer surveys, refer to paragraph 35 of the Explanatory Notes.

Civilian population aged 15 years and over

All usual residents of Australia aged 15 years and over except members of the permanent defence forces, certain diplomatic personnel of overseas governments customarily excluded from census and estimated population counts, overseas residents in Australia, and members of non-Australian defence forces (and their dependants) stationed in Australia.

Commonwealth government employees

Employees of all departments, agencies and authorities created by or reporting to the Commonwealth Parliament. Those bodies run jointly by the Commonwealth Government and state governments are classified to Commonwealth.

Compensation of employees

National Accounts. The total remuneration, in cash or in kind, payable by enterprises to employees in return for work done by the employees during the accounting period. Compensation of employees comprises wages and salaries (in cash and in kind) and **employers' social contributions**. Compensation of employees is not payable in respect of unpaid work undertaken voluntarily, including the work done by members of a household within an unincorporated enterprise owned by the same household. Compensation of employees excludes any taxes payable by the employer on the wage and salary bill (e.g. payroll tax, fringe benefits tax). See **Australian System of National Accounts: Concepts, Sources and Methods** (cat. no. 5216.0) for further information.

Contributing family worker

A person who works without pay, in an economic enterprise operated by a relative.

Country of birth

Classified according to the **Standard Australian Classification of Countries (SACC)** (cat. no. 1269.0).

Couple families

A family based on two persons who are in a registered or de facto marriage and who are usually resident in the same household.

Dependent child

Any child in a family under 15 years of age or aged 15-24 years who is attending full-time education (except those who have a partner or child of their own usually resident in the household).

Dependent student

A child who is 15-24 years of age, who is attending full-time education, and who has no partner or child of his or her own usually resident in the same household.

Discouraged jobseekers

Persons with marginal attachment to the labour force who wanted to work and were available to start work within the next four weeks but whose main reason for not actively looking for work was that they believed they would not find a job for any of the following reasons:

- considered to be too young/too old by employers
- lacked necessary schooling, training, skills or experience
- difficulties because of language or ethnic background
- no jobs in their locality or line of work
- no jobs available at all.

Duration of unemployment

Under the redesigned LFS questionnaire, implemented in April 2001, the definition of duration of unemployment is the period of time from when an unemployed person began looking for work, until the end of the reference week; or the period of time since an unemployed person last worked in any job for two weeks or more, until the end of the reference week; whichever was the shorter period.

Prior to April 2001, duration of unemployment was defined in the LFS as the period of time from when an unemployed person began looking for work, until the end of the reference week; or the period of time since an unemployed person last worked full-time for two weeks or more, until the end of the reference week; whichever was the shorter period.

Employed

Employed persons include all persons aged 15 years and over who, during the reference week:

- worked for one hour or more for pay, profit, commission or payment in kind in a job or business, or on a farm (comprising employees, employers and own account workers)
- worked for one hour or more without pay in a family business or on a farm (i.e. contributing family workers)
- were employees who had a job but were not at work and were
 - away from work for less than four weeks up to the end of the reference week
 - away from work for more than four weeks up to the end of the reference week and received pay for some or all of the four week period to the end of the reference week
 - away from work as a standard work or shift arrangement
 - on strike or locked out
 - on workers' compensation and expected to return to their job
- were employers or own account workers, who had a job, business or farm, but were not at work.

Employed full-time

See **full-time employed**.

Employed part-time

See **part-time employed**.

Employee

Labour Force Survey and other household surveys. A person who works for a public or private employer and receives remuneration in wages, salary, a retainer fee from their employer while working on a commission basis, tips, piece rates, or payment in kind, or a person who operates their own incorporated enterprise with or without hiring employees.

Employer surveys. Employees are wage and salary earners who received pay for any part of the reference period. For information about scope exclusions applying to employer surveys, refer to paragraph 35 of the Explanatory Notes.

Employee job

Wage Cost Index. A job for which the occupant receives remuneration in wages, salary, payment in kind, or piece rates. All employee jobs in all employing organisations (except those excluded from all ABS labour employer surveys) are in scope of the WCI, except the following:

- 'non-maintainable' jobs (i.e. jobs that are expected to be occupied for less than six months of a year)
- jobs for which wages and salaries are not determined by the Australian labour market (e.g. working proprietors of small incorporated enterprises, most employees of Community Development Employment Programs, jobs where the remuneration is set in a foreign country).

For information about scope exclusions applying to employer surveys, refer to paragraph 35 of the Explanatory Notes.

Employer

Labour Force Survey and other household surveys. A person who operates their own unincorporated economic enterprise or engages independently in a profession or trade, and hires one or more employees.

Employer surveys. A business with one or more employees.

Employers' social contributions

National Accounts. Contributions by employers to pension and superannuation funds; and premiums paid by employers to workers' compensation schemes for occupational injuries and diseases.

Extended labour force underutilisation rate

The unemployed, plus the underemployed, plus two groups of marginally attached to the labour force:

- (i) persons actively looking for work, not available to start work in the reference week, but available to start work within four weeks and
- (ii) discouraged jobseekers

as a percentage of the labour force augmented by (i) and (ii).

Family

Two or more persons, one of whom is at least 15 years of age, who are related by blood, marriage (registered or de facto), adoption, step or fostering; and who are usually resident in the same household. The basis of a family is formed by identifying the presence of a couple relationship, lone parent-child relationship or other blood relationship. Some households will, therefore, contain more than one family.

Family reference person

In families which are not couple families or one-parent families, as defined, the family reference person is the eldest person in the household.

Former workers

Unemployed persons who have previously worked for two weeks or more but not in the last two years.

Full-time educational attendance

Persons aged 15-19 who, during the reference week were enrolled full-time at secondary or high schools, and those aged 15-24 who, during the reference week, were enrolled full-time at a Technical and Further Education (TAFE) college, university, or other tertiary educational institution.

Full-time employed

Household surveys. Persons employed full-time are those employed persons who usually worked 35 hours or more a week (in all jobs) and those who, although usually working less than 35 hours a week, worked 35 hours or more during the reference week.

Full-time employees

Employer surveys. Full-time employees are permanent, temporary and casual employees who normally work the agreed or award hours for a full-time employee in their occupation and received pay for any part of the reference period. If agreed or award hours do not apply, employees are regarded as full-time if they ordinarily work 35 hours or more per week.

Gross domestic product (GDP)

National Accounts. The total market value of goods and services produced in Australia within a given period after deducting the cost of goods and services used up in the process of production but before deducting allowances for the consumption of fixed capital. Thus gross domestic product, as here defined, is at 'market prices'. It is equivalent to gross national expenditure plus exports of goods and services less imports of goods and services. See **Australian System of National Accounts: Concepts, Sources and Methods** (cat. no. 5216.0) for further information.

Gross mixed income (GMI)

National Accounts. The owners of unincorporated enterprises, or other members of their households, may work without receiving any wage or salary. Mixed income includes both **gross operating surplus** for the unincorporated enterprises and returns for the proprietors' own labour (akin to wages and salaries). See **Australian System of National Accounts: Concepts, Sources and Methods** (cat. no. 5216.0) for further information.

Gross operating surplus (GOS)

National Accounts. The amount of gross output remaining after subtracting costs incurred in producing that output, but before any deductions for consumption of fixed capital. See **Australian System of National Accounts: Concepts, Sources and Methods** (cat. no. 5216.0) for further information.

Household

A group of one or more persons in a private dwelling who consider themselves to be separate from other persons (if any) in the dwelling, and who make regular provision to take meals separately from other persons, i.e. at different times or in different rooms. Lodgers who receive accommodation but no meals are treated as separate households. Boarders who receive both accommodation and meals are not treated as separate households. A household may consist of any number of families and non-family members.

Industrial dispute

A withdrawal from work by a group of employees, or a refusal by an employer or a number of employers to permit some or all of their employees to work, each withdrawal or refusal being made in order to enforce a demand, to resist a demand, or to express a grievance.

Industry

An industry is a group of businesses or organisations that perform similar sets of activities in terms of the production of goods and services. Industry is classified according to the **Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification (ANZSIC), 1993** (cat. no. 1292.0). The industry assigned to an employed person is the industry of the organisation in which the person's main job is located. Unemployed persons who had worked for two weeks or more in the last two years are classified according to the industry of their most recent job.

Job leavers

Unemployed persons who have worked for two weeks or more in the past two years and **left that job voluntarily** - that is, because (for example): of unsatisfactory work arrangements/pay/hours; the job was a holiday job or they left the job to return to studies; or their last job was running their own business and they closed down or sold that business for reasons other than financial difficulties.

Job losers

Unemployed persons who have worked for two weeks or more in the past two years and **left that job involuntarily**: that is, they were laid off or retrenched from that job; left that job because of their own ill-health or injury; the job was seasonal or temporary; or their last job was running their own business and the business closed down because of financial difficulties.

Job vacancy

A job vacancy is an employee job available for immediate filling on the survey reference date and for which recruitment action has been taken. Recruitment action includes efforts to fill vacancies by advertising, by factory notices, by notifying public or private employment agencies or trade unions and by contacting, interviewing or selecting applicants already registered with the enterprise or organisation. Excluded are vacancies:

- for jobs which became vacant on the survey date and were filled that same day
- for jobs of less than one day's duration
- to be filled by persons already hired, or by promotion or transfer of existing employees
- to be filled by employees returning from paid or unpaid leave or after industrial dispute(s)
- not available for immediate filling on the survey reference date
- for work to be carried out by contractors
- for which no recruitment action has been taken
- where a person has been appointed but has not yet commenced duty
- to be filled by staff from contract labour agencies
- for jobs available only to persons already employed by the enterprise or organisation.

For information about scope exclusions applying to employer surveys, refer to paragraph 35 of the Explanatory Notes.

Labour force

The labour force is the labour supply available for the production of economic goods and services in a given period, and is the most widely used measure of the economically active population. Persons in the labour force are classified as either employed or unemployed according to their activities during the reference period by using a specific set of priority rules.

Labour force status

A classification of the civilian population aged 15 years and over into employed, unemployed or not in the labour force, as defined. The definitions conform closely to the international standard definitions adopted by the International Conferences of Labour Statisticians.

Labour force underutilisation rate

The unemployed plus the underemployed, as a percentage of the labour force.

Local government employees

Employees of municipalities and shires and other local authorities created by or subject to the provisions of local government legislation, such as county councils in New South Wales.

Lone parent

A person who has no spouse or partner present in the household but who forms a parent-child relationship with at least one dependent or non-dependent child usually resident in the household.

Lone person

A person who makes provision for their food and other essentials for living, without combining with any other person to form part of a multi-person household. They may live in a dwelling on their own or share a dwelling with another individual or family.

Long-term unemployed

Persons unemployed for 12 months or more. See **duration of unemployment** for details of the calculation of duration of unemployment.

Long-term unemployment rate

The number of long-term unemployed persons expressed as a percentage of the labour force.

Marginal attachment to the labour force

Persons who were not in the labour force in the reference week, wanted to work, and:

- were actively looking for work but did not meet the availability criteria to be classified as unemployed or
- were not actively looking for work but were available to start work within four weeks or could start work within four weeks if child care was available.

The criteria for determining those in the labour force are based on activity (i.e. working or looking for work) and availability to start work during the reference week. The criteria associated with marginal attachment to the labour force, in particular the concepts of wanting to work and reasons for not actively looking for work, are more subjective. Hence, the measurement against these criteria is affected by the respondent's own interpretation of the concepts used. An individual respondent's interpretation may be affected by their work aspirations, as well as family, economic and other commitments.

Marital status

See **social marital status**.

Mean age

The sum of the ages of all the persons in a group, divided by the total number of persons in that group.

Mean duration of unemployment

The sum of the duration of unemployment of all the unemployed persons in a group, divided by the total number of unemployed persons in that group.

Median age

The age which divides a group of persons into two equal groups: one comprising persons whose age is above the median; and the other, persons whose age is below it.

Median duration of unemployment

The duration which divides unemployed persons into two equal groups: one comprising persons whose duration of unemployment is above the median; and the other, persons whose duration is below it.

Non-dependent child

A child of a couple or lone parent usually resident in the household, aged over 15 years and who is not a dependent student aged 15-24 years, and who has no partner or child of their own usually resident in the household.

Non-family member

A person who is not related to any other member of the household in which they are living.

Not in the labour force

Persons who were not classified as employed or unemployed.

Occupation

An occupation is a collection of jobs that are sufficiently similar in their main tasks to be grouped together for the purposes of classification.

Occupation is classified according to the **ASCO Australian Standard Classification of Occupations, Second Edition** (cat. no. 1220.0). The occupation assigned to an employed person relates to the person's main job. Unemployed persons who had worked for two weeks or more in the last two years are classified according to the occupation of their most recent job.

One-parent family

A family consisting of a lone parent with at least one dependent or non-dependent child (regardless of age) who is also usually resident in the household.

Ordinary time earnings

See **weekly ordinary time earnings**.

Original series

Estimates produced directly from the survey data, before seasonal adjustment or trend estimation takes place.

Other family

Related individuals residing in the same household who do not form a couple or parent-child relationship with any other person in the household and are not attached to a couple or one parent family in the household. If two brothers, for example, are living together and neither is a spouse, a lone parent or a child, then they are classified as other family.

Overtime earnings

See **weekly overtime earnings**.

Own-account worker

A person who operates his or her own unincorporated economic enterprise or engages independently in a profession or trade, and hires no employees.

Participation rate

The labour force participation rate for any group within the population is the labour force component of that population, expressed as a percentage of the population in that group.

Part-time employed

Household surveys. Persons employed part-time are those employed persons who usually worked less than 35 hours a week (in all jobs) and either did so during the reference week, or were not at work in the reference week.

Reason for leaving last job

Unemployed persons who had worked for two weeks or more in the past two years classified by whether they left that job voluntarily, that is, job leavers; or left that job involuntarily, that is, job losers.

Seasonally adjusted series

A time series of estimates with the estimated effects of normal seasonal variation removed. See paragraphs 7-13 of the Explanatory Notes for more detail.

Social marital status

Social marital status is the relationship status of an individual with reference to another person who is usually resident in the household. A marriage exists when two people live together as husband and wife, or partners, regardless of whether the marriage is formalised through registration. Individuals are, therefore, regarded as married if they are in a de facto marriage, or if they are living with the person to whom they are registered as married.

State capital cities

The areas determining the six state capital cities are the Statistical Divisions for those capital cities defined in the **Statistical Geography**:

State government employees

Employees of all State government departments and authorities created by, or reporting to, State Parliaments, including organisations for which the Commonwealth has assumed financial responsibility. Following self-government, the Northern Territory and the Australian Capital Territory administrations have been classified to State Governments. Employees of State Governments employed interstate are included in the estimates of the State in which they are based.

Status in employment

Employed persons classified by whether they were employees, employers, own account workers or contributing family workers.

Total earnings

See **weekly total earnings**.

Total hourly rates of pay index

Wage Cost Index. This index measures quarterly change in combined ordinary time and overtime hourly rates of pay. See **Wage Cost Index, Australia** (cat. no. 6345.0) for more information.

Trend series

A smoothed seasonally adjusted series of estimates. See paragraphs 7-13 of the Explanatory Notes for more detail.

Underemployed workers

Underemployed workers are employed persons who want, and are available for, more hours of work than they currently have. They comprise:

- persons employed part-time who want to work more hours and are available to start work with more hours, either in the reference week or in the four weeks subsequent to the survey
- persons employed full-time who worked part-time hours in the reference week for economic reasons (such as being stood down or insufficient work being available). It is assumed that these people wanted to work full-time in the reference week and would have been available to do so.

Unemployed

Persons aged 15 years and over who were not employed during the reference week, and

- had actively looked for full-time or part-time work at any time in the four weeks up to the end of the reference week and were available for work in the reference week, or
- were waiting to start a new job within four weeks from the end of the reference week and could have started in the reference week if the job had been available then.

Unemployed looking for first full-time job

Unemployed persons looking for full-time work who had never worked full-time for two weeks or more.

Unemployed looking for first job

Unemployed persons who had never worked for two weeks or more.

Unemployed looking for full-time work

Unemployed persons who:

- actively looked for full-time work, or
- were waiting to start a new full-time job.

Unemployed looking for part-time work

Unemployed persons who:

- actively looked for part-time work only, or
- were waiting to start a new part-time job.

Unemployment rate

The number of unemployed persons expressed as a percentage of the labour force.

Unemployment to population ratio

For any group, the number of unemployed persons expressed as a percentage of the civilian population aged 15 and over in the same group.

Usual hours worked

The hours usually worked per week by an employed person.

Wage and salary earners

See **employee**.

Weekly ordinary time earnings

Weekly ordinary time earnings refers to one week's earnings of employees for the reference period attributable to award, standard or agreed hours of work, calculated before taxation and any other deductions (e.g. superannuation, board and lodging) have been made. Included are piecework payments and one week's portion of regular production and task bonuses and commissions. Excluded are overtime payments and payments not related to the reference period, e.g. bonus payments for earlier periods of work.

Weekly overtime earnings

Weekly overtime earnings refers to payment for hours worked in the reference week in excess of award, standard or agreed hours of work, calculated before taxation and any other deductions (e.g. superannuation) have been made.

Weekly total earnings

Weekly total earnings of employees is equal to weekly ordinary time earnings plus weekly overtime earnings.

Working days lost

Refers to working days lost by employees directly and indirectly involved in an industrial dispute. For some disputes working days lost are estimated on the basis of the number of employees involved and the duration of the dispute.

Working days lost per thousand employees

Calculated by dividing the total number of working days lost by the total number of employees and multiplying by 1,000. The number of employees is obtained from the Labour Force Survey.

Appendix

Appendix 1: Data sources for tables

How to find data sources

To find a publication on the ABS web site, go to <https://www.abs.gov.au> and click on Publications. Search for the first two digits of the catalogue number under the subject listing, e.g. to find the publication **Labour Force, Australia** (cat. no. 6202.0), look under '62. Labour force'. Catalogue numbers are listed under the relevant subject listing.

Similarly, to find a spreadsheet, go to <https://www.abs.gov.au> and click on Time Series Spreadsheets, and to find a data cube, go to <https://www.abs.gov.au> click on Data Cubes. Individual numbered spreadsheets and data cubes are listed under the catalogue number. Monthly, quarterly and annual products are listed separately.

No. Table description

Data source

Notes

1.1 Trend	Labour Force, Australia (cat. no. 6202.0) 6202.0.55.001 spreadsheet table 1	
1.2 Age by marital status	6291.0.55.001 spreadsheet table 1	
1.3 States and territories	Labour Force, Australia (cat. no. 6202.0) 6291.0.55.001 spreadsheet table 2	Excludes Capital city/balance of state
1.4 Educational attendance	6291.0.55.001 spreadsheet table 3	More detailed Age
1.5 Country of birth	6291.0.55.001 data cube LM4	Includes Sex, State, Less detailed Country of birth
	6291.0.55.001 data cube LM5	Includes Sex, Age, State, Less detailed Country of birth
	6291.0.55.001 data cube LM6	Includes Sex, State
	6291.0.55.001 data cube LM7	Includes Sex, State, Less detailed Country of birth
Year of arrival	6291.0.55.001 data cube LM4	Includes Sex, State, Less detailed Country of birth
	6291.0.55.001 data cube LM7	Includes Sex, State, Less detailed Country of birth
1.6 Relationship in household	6291.0.55.001 data cube FM1 6291.0.55.001 data cube FM2 6291.0.55.001 data cube FM3 6291.0.55.001 data cube FM4	Includes State Includes Age Includes Hours worked Unemployed persons only, Includes Duration of unemployment
1.7 Families	ABS data available on request, Labour Force.	
1.8 International comparisons	International Labour Organisation http://www.ilo.org , Year Book of Labour Statistics 1998, 2000, 2001 and 2002 International Labour Organisation http://www.ilo.org , Key Indicators of the Labour Market 2001-02	
2.1 Industry: trend	6291.0.55.001 spreadsheet table 4	Includes Employed full-time, Employed part-time
2.2 Industry: divisions and subdivisions	6291.0.55.001 spreadsheet table 6 6291.0.55.001 data cube E03 6291.0.55.001 data cube E05 6291.0.55.001 data cube E06	Includes Sex, State, Hours worked, Less detailed Industry Includes Sex, Age, Status in employment, Hours worked Includes Sex, State, Status in employment, Hours worked, More detailed Industry
2.3 Occupation	6291.0.55.001 spreadsheet table 7 6291.0.55.001 spreadsheet table 12 6291.0.55.001 data cube E07 6291.0.55.001 data cube E08	Less detailed Occupation Includes Hours worked, Less detailed Occupation Includes Age, Hours worked, Status in employment Includes State, Status in employment, More detailed Occupation
2.4 Industry and Occupation by full-time part-time status	6291.0.55.001 data cube E09	Includes State, Hours worked
2.5 Industry by status in employment	6291.0.55.001 data cube E04 6291.0.55.001 data cube E05 6291.0.55.001 data cube E06	Includes Sex, State, Excludes Industry Includes Sex, Age, More detailed Industry Includes Sex, State, More detailed Industry
Occupation by status in employment	6291.0.55.001 data cube E04 6291.0.55.001 data cube E07 6291.0.55.001 data cube E08	Includes Sex, State, Excludes Occupation Includes Sex, Age, More detailed Occupation Includes Sex, State, More detailed Occupation
Hours worked in all jobs by status in employment	6291.0.55.001 spreadsheet table 8 6291.0.55.001 spreadsheet table 13 6291.0.55.001 data cube E04 6291.0.55.001 data cube E05 6291.0.55.001 data cube E06 6291.0.55.001 data cube E07 6291.0.55.001 data cube E08	Excludes Hours worked, Includes Sex, Employed full-time, Employed part-time Includes Sex Includes Sex, State Includes Sex, Age, Industry Includes Sex, State, Industry Includes Sex, Age, Occupation Includes Sex, State, Occupation
2.6 Average hours worked in all jobs by Industry	6291.0.55.001 spreadsheet table 11 6291.0.55.001 data cube E03 6291.0.55.001 data cube E05 6291.0.55.001 data cube E06 6291.0.55.001 data cube E09	Includes State Includes Age, Status in employment, More detailed Industry Includes State, Status in employment, More detailed Industry Includes State, Occupation
Average hours worked in all jobs by Occupation	6291.0.55.001 spreadsheet table 12 6291.0.55.001 data cube E07 6291.0.55.001 data cube E08 6291.0.55.001 data cube E09	Includes Age, Status in employment, More detailed Occupation Includes State, Status in employment, More detailed Occupation Includes State, Industry
2.7 Actual hours worked in all jobs	6291.0.55.001 spreadsheet table 9 6291.0.55.001 spreadsheet table 11 6291.0.55.001 spreadsheet table 12 6291.0.55.001 spreadsheet table 13	Includes Industry Includes Occupation Includes Status in employment

	6291.0.55.001 data cube EM1	Includes Age, State
	6291.0.55.001 data cube E03	Includes State, Industry
	6291.0.55.001 data cube E04	Includes State, Status in employment
2.8 Actual hours worked in all jobs	6291.0.55.001 spreadsheet table 9	
	6291.0.55.001 spreadsheet table 11	Includes Industry
	6291.0.55.001 spreadsheet table 12	Includes Occupation
	6291.0.55.001 spreadsheet table 13	Includes Status in employment
	6291.0.55.001 data cube EM1	Includes Age, State
	6291.0.55.001 data cube E03	Includes State, Industry
	6291.0.55.001 data cube E04	Includes State, Status in employment
Usual hours worked in all jobs	6291.0.55.001 spreadsheet table 10	
	6291.0.55.001 data cube EM3	Includes Age, State
	6291.0.55.001 data cube E10	Includes State, Industry
2.9 Full-time workers who worked less than 35 hours in all jobs	6291.0.55.001 data cube EM2	Includes Age, State, Hours worked
2.10 Future employment expectations by job tenure	6291.0.55.001 data cube E02	Excludes Future employment expectations, Includes State, Age
2.11 Public sector employees	Wage and Salary Earners, Public Sector, Australia (cat. no. 6248.0)	
Public sector employees: Australia Totals	6248.0.55.001 spreadsheet table 1	Includes State
Public sector employees by Level of government: Trend	6248.0.55.001 spreadsheet table 2	Includes Commonwealth government, State, Seasonally adjusted and Original data
	6248.0.55.001 spreadsheet table 3	Includes State government, State, Seasonally adjusted and Original data
	6248.0.55.001 spreadsheet table 4	Includes Local government, State, Seasonally adjusted and Original data
Public sector employees by State: Trend	6248.0.55.001 spreadsheet table 1	Includes Seasonally adjusted and Original data
	6248.0.55.001 spreadsheet table 2	Includes Commonwealth government, Seasonally adjusted and Original data
	6248.0.55.001 spreadsheet table 3	Includes State government, Seasonally adjusted and Original data
	6248.0.55.001 spreadsheet table 4	Includes Local government, Seasonally adjusted and Original data
Public sector employees by Industry: Original	6248.0.55.001 spreadsheet table 7a	Includes Industry
3.1 Unemployed persons: Duration of unemployment by Age	6291.0.55.001 data cube UM2	Excludes Age, Median Duration of unemployment
	6291.0.55.001 data cube UM3	Excludes Median Duration of unemployment
3.2 Long-term unemployed	6291.0.55.001 spreadsheet table 15b	
	6291.0.55.001 data cube UM2	Excludes Trend data, Includes State, More detailed Duration of unemployment
	6291.0.55.001 data cube UM3	Excludes Trend data, Includes State, Age
3.3 Unemployed persons: Reason for unemployment by Industry of last job	6291.0.55.001 data cube UQ1	Excludes Industry of last job
	6291.0.55.001 data cube UQ2	Excludes Reason for unemployment
Unemployed persons: Reason for unemployment by Occupation of last job	6291.0.55.001 data cube UQ1	Excludes Occupation of last job
	6291.0.55.001 data cube UQ3	Excludes Reason for unemployment
4.1 Underutilised labour	Labour Force, Australia (cat. no. 6203.0), October 2002	Article in publication
4.2 Underutilised labour - states	Labour Force, Australia (cat. no. 6203.0), October 2002	Article in publication
4.3 Part-time workers	6291.0.55.001 data cube E01	Less detailed Hours worked
4.4 Persons not in the labour force	6291.0.55.001 data cube NM1	
5.1 Wage cost index	Wage Cost Index, Australia (cat. no. 6345.0)	
Wage cost index: Trend data	6345.0 spreadsheet table 1B	
Wage cost index: Australia, States and territories	6345.0 spreadsheet table 2B	
Wage cost index: Private sector	6345.0 spreadsheet table 3B	Includes States and territories
Wage cost index: Public sector	6345.0 spreadsheet table 4B	Includes States and territories
Wage cost index: Industry	6345.0 spreadsheet table 5B	Includes Sector
Wage cost index: Occupation	6345.0 spreadsheet table 7B	Includes Sector
5.2 Average weekly earnings	Average Weekly Earnings, Australia (cat. no. 6302.0)	
Average weekly earnings by Sex	6302.0 spreadsheet table 1	Includes Full-time adult total earnings
Average weekly earnings: Private sector	6302.0 spreadsheet table 4	Includes Full-time adult total earnings
Average weekly earnings: Public sector	6302.0 spreadsheet table 7	Includes Full-time adult total earnings
5.3 Compensation of employees	Australian National Accounts: National Income, Expenditure and Product (cat. no. 5206.0)	
6.1 Industrial disputes: Working days lost	Industrial Disputes, Australia (cat. no. 6321.0)	
Industrial disputes: Working days lost by State	6321.0 spreadsheet table 3	
Industrial disputes: Working days lost by Industry	6321.0 spreadsheet table 2	
6.2 Industrial disputes: Working days lost per 1,000 employees	ABS data available on request, Industrial Disputes	

List of Articles (Appendix)

Appendix 2 List of Articles

January 2004

Employment in information and communication technology

Labour force participation: international comparison

Technical report: Changes to Labour Force Survey seasonal adjustment processes.

October 2003

Labour market transitions of teenagers

Spotlight: Country of birth

Spotlight: Multiple job holders

Technical report: New Labour Force Survey sample selections: analysis of the effect on estimates

July 2003

Experimental volume measures of labour underutilisation

Unemployment and participation rates in Australia: a cohort analysis

Spotlight: Population, participation and productivity: contributions to Australia's economic growth

Technical report: Measures of weekly hours worked

April 2003

Do job vacancies provide a leading indicator of employment growth?

Characteristics of underemployed workers

Spotlight: Parental leave

Spotlight: Methods of setting pay

Technical report: Labour Force Survey sample redesign

Note: the following articles appeared in **Labour Force, Australia** (cat. no. 6203.0).

February 2003

Seasonal reanalysis of monthly labour force estimates

December 2002

Volatility of labour force estimates

October 2002

Measures of labour underutilisation

February 2002

Seasonal reanalysis of monthly labour force estimates

October 2001

Full-time and part-time employment

August 2001

Experimental estimates: labour force characteristics of Indigenous Australians

June 2001

Duration of unemployment: recent definitional changes

February 2001

Unemployment and supplementary measures of underutilised labour

Seasonal reanalysis of monthly labour force estimates

May 2000

Status in employment data changes: correction

April 2000

Using the unemployment rate series to illustrate the seasonal adjustment process

February 2000

Seasonal reanalysis of monthly labour force estimates

December 1999

Why are there differences between two seasonally adjusted measures of Australian total employment?

November 1999

Industry, occupation and status in employment data

Labour force status and other characteristics of families

October 1999

Labour force projections: 1999-2016

July 1999

Casual employment

April 1999

Introduction of updated standard error estimates

February 1999

Revisions to monthly labour force estimates

January 1999

Concordance between the first and second editions of the **Australian Standard Classification of Occupations (ASCO)** - revised

Related publications (Appendix)

Appendix 3: Related publications

To find the latest release, click on the associated link below.

Title	cat. no.	Frequency
Information papers and other reference material		
ABS Labour Market Statistics	6106.0.55.001	Irregular
Australian System of National Accounts: Concepts, Sources & Methods	5216.0	Irregular
Changes to Labour Force Survey Products	6297.0	Irregular
Forthcoming Changes to Labour Force Statistics	6292.0	Irregular
Implementing the Redesignated Labour Force Survey Questionnaire	6295.0	Irregular
Labour Force Survey Sample Design	6269.0	Irregular
Labour Force Survey Standard Errors	6298.0	Irregular
Labour Statistics: Concepts, Sources & Methods	6102.0	Irregular
Questionnaires Used in the Labour Force Survey	6232.0	Irregular
Wage Cost Index	6346.0	Irregular
Labour force supplementary surveys		
Career Experience	6254.0	Irregular
Child Care	4402.0	Irregular
Education & Work	6227.0	Annual
Employee Earnings, Benefits & Trade Union Membership	6310.0	Annual
Forms of Employment	6359.0	Irregular
Job Search Experience	6222.0	Annual
Labour Force Experience	6206.0	Biennial
Labour Force Status & Other Characteristics of Families(a)	6224.0	Discontinued
Labour Force Status & Other Characteristics of Migrants	6250.0	Irregular
Labour Mobility	6209.0	Biennial
Locations of Work	6275.0	Irregular
Multiple Jobholding(b)	6216.0	Discontinued
Persons Not in the Labour Force	6220.0	Annual
Retirement & Retirement Intentions	6238.0	Irregular
Retrenchment & Redundancy	6266.0	Irregular
Underemployed Workers	6265.0	Annual
Work-Related Injuries	6324.0	Irregular
Working Arrangements	6342.0	Irregular
Sub-annual labour surveys		
Average Weekly Earnings	6302.0	Quarterly
Industrial Disputes	6321.0	Monthly
Job Vacancies	6354.0	Quarterly
Labour Force	6202.0	Monthly
Wage & Salary Earners, Public Sector	6248.0	Quarterly
Wage Cost Index	6345.0	Quarterly
Other labour surveys		
Employee Earnings & Hours	6306.0	Biennial
Employer Training Expenditure & Practices	6362.0	Irregular
Labour Costs	6348.0	Irregular
Other publications		
Australian Economic Indicators	1350.0	Monthly
Australian National Accounts: National Income, Expenditure & Product	5206.0	Quarterly
Australian Social Trends	4102.0	Annual
Australian System of National Accounts	5204.0	Annual
Australians' Employment & Unemployment Patterns: First Results	6289.0	Irregular
Business Indicators	5676.0	Quarterly
Census of Population & Housing: Selected Education & Labour Force Statistics	2017.0	Irregular
Education & Training Indicators	4230.0	Irregular
Employment Arrangements & Superannuation	6361.0	Irregular
General Social Survey	4159.0	Irregular
Government Benefits, Taxes & Household Income	6537.0	Irregular
Household Income & Income Distribution	6523.0	Irregular
Measuring Australia's Progress	1370.0	Irregular
Regional Wage & Salary Earners - Electronic Publication	5673.0.55.001	Annual
Superannuation: Coverage & Financial Characteristics	6360.0	Irregular
Voluntary Work	4441.0	Irregular

(a) Latest data available via the ABS web site, and on request, for June 2003.

(b) Latest data available on request for July 2001.